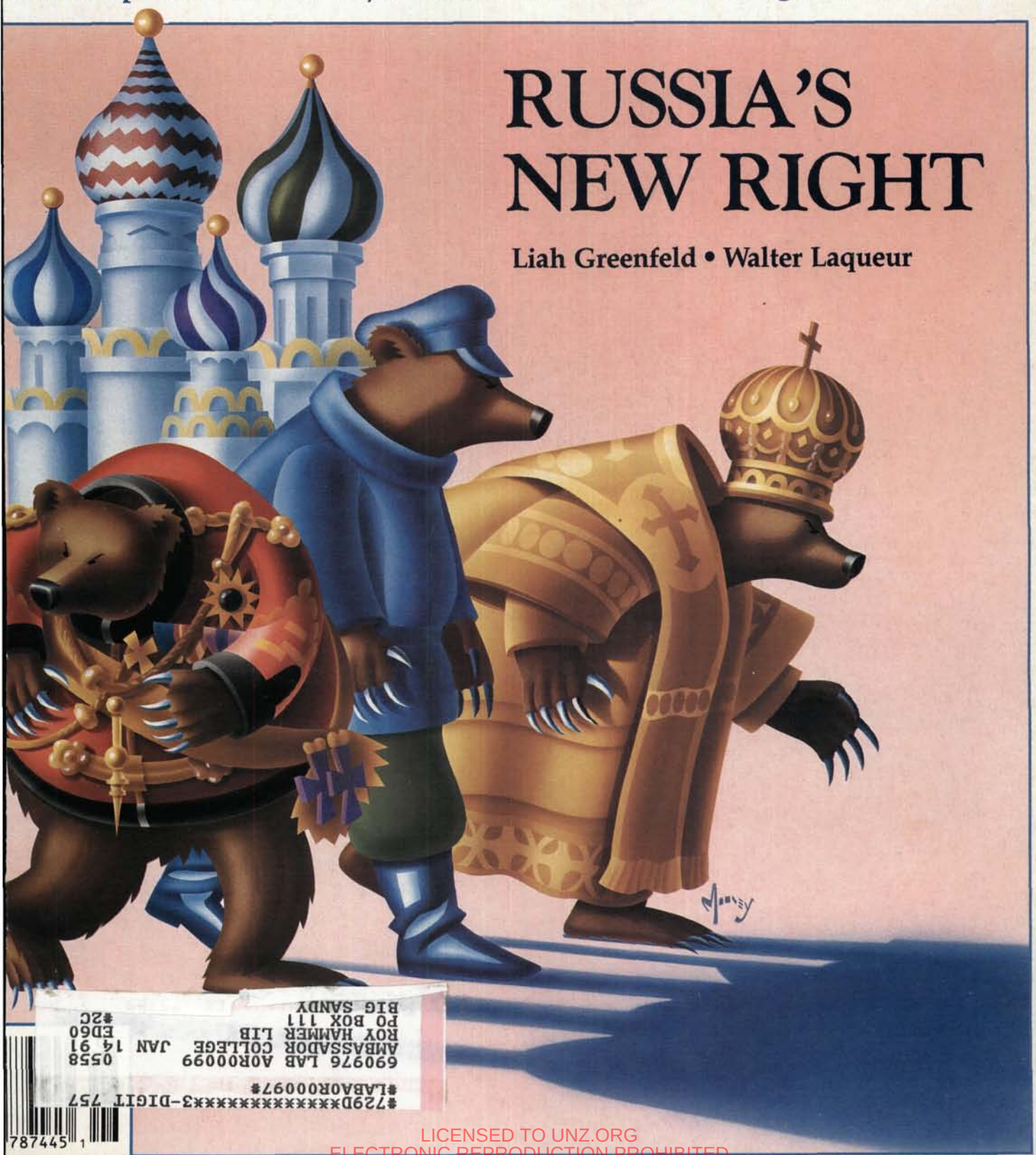
THE ROMANIAN REVOLUTION: TWO REPORTS

FEBRUARY 5, 1990 · $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

alifornia politics '92 · Kinsley on affirmative action · Pittsburgh's menorah wars



RUSSIA'S NEW RIGHT

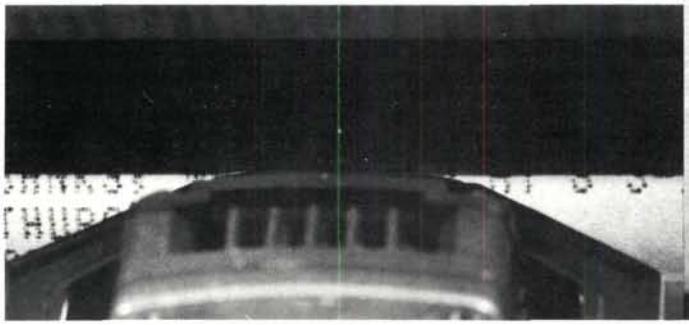
Liah Greenfeld • Walter Laqueur

#729D**********3-DIGIT 757
#LABAOR00097#
690976 LAB AOR00099
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE JAN 14 91 0558
ROY HAMMER LIB ED60
PO BOX 111 #2C
BIG SANDY

787445 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who, What, When, Where,



Does today's news leave you wondering "why?"

Tune in weekdays to C-SPAN's **live viewer call-in programs** and talk directly with the nation's top political journalists. Each year over 400 print reporters like USA Today's Jessica Lee talk one-on-one with C-SPAN viewers about breaking news and emerging issues.

Get to know the faces behind the bylines. And get answers to your questions about today's top news events and the issues that shape tomorrow's important stories.

Mondays and Fridays - 8 am ET
Tuesdays through Thursdays - 8:45 am ET

C-SPAN

Open to the Public

C-SPAN is a public service of the cable television industry.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
SSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
JAN 25 1990

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

FEBRUARY 5, 1990

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 3,916

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
HENDRIK HERTZBERG
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT,
MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY,
MORTON KONDRACKE, ROBERT WRIGHT
Editor, New Republic Books (Basic Books)
BILL NEWLIN
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry
RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Architecture
HERBERT MUSCHAMP
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE,
JAMES K. GLASSMAN, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER,
VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ADAM MICHNIK,
ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER,
MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL,
RICHARD L. STROUT, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER,
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN,
MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Associate Editor
JACOB WEISBERG
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Assistant Editors
KAREN LEHRMAN, LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Assistant Production Manager
KRISTIN CONRADI
Production Associate
ERIC V. PETERSON
Literary Assistant
SARA MOSLE
Reporter-Researchers
DANIEL GROSS, DAVID P. HAMILTON,
WESTON KOSOVA

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Associate Publisher
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Director
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
JULIE HAWKINS
Circulation Assistant
PATTI NAJDA
Back Issues and Reception
CAROLYN PARHAM
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

Cover by Gerry Mooney for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Articles on pages 21 and 30.

4 MICHAEL KINSLEY **TRB: INVIDIOUS DISTINCTIONS** Supporters of affirmative action need to ask whether the plums being divvied up should exist at all.

6 CORRESPONDENCE *Glory*, cancer wars, Catholic writers, &c.

7 THE EDITORS **LIBERTY OR UNION?** Gorbachev's Lithuanian trip shows just how explosive ethnic problems remain throughout the tattered Soviet empire. **NOTEBOOK** Bush's big fib, Atwater's ego, &c.

9 FRED BARNES **WHITE HOUSE WATCH: THE UNKINDEST CUT** Bush's plan to quash Senator Moynihan's politically brilliant proposal to cut Social Security taxes.

12 MICHAEL MCGOUGH **MENORAH WARS** The Supreme Court's hair-splitting about winter holiday symbols has deposited a large reindeer pat in Pittsburgh.

14 NORMAN J. ORNSTEIN AND MARK SCHMITT **THE BUCK STOPS** California is the nation's political piggy bank. Come 1992, the cash will stay in state.

17 VLADIMIR TISMANEANU **NEW MASKS, OLD FACES** The composition of Romania's National Salvation Front suggests the Communists aren't finished yet.

18 ANNA HUSARSKA **STREET THEATER** The madman is gone, but in Bucharest the revolutionaries are still demonstrating in the streets.

21 WALTER LAQUEUR **FROM RUSSIA WITH HATE** The paladins of the New Right in the Soviet Union rant about enemies, from Zionists to Stalinists, within and without. But their curious ideology keeps getting more popular.

26 STANLEY KAUFFMANN **ON FILMS: THE PAST, FUTURE, AND PRESENT** Tanner's sputtering *A Flame in My Heart*; Costa-Gavras's broken *Music Box*; an Argentinean newcomer.

28 ARTHUR KLEINMAN **DO NOT GO GENTLE** Frederick Wiseman films life and the end of life in an intensive care unit.

30 LIAH GREENFELD **THE CLOSING OF THE RUSSIAN MIND** A famous mathematician, Igor Shafarevich, is also among the most articulate champions of the new Russian right. His *Russophobia* offers a state-of-the-art sampling of nationalism.

34 GEOFFREY HAWTHORN **THE FALL OF ECONOMIC MAN** *Solomonic Judgements*; *The Cement of Society*; *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* by Jon Elster

35 SANDRA MCPHERSON **POEM** *Two Young Trees Bending in Strong Wind*

38 SVEN BIRKERTS **AARON'S ROD** *Brooklyn Boy* by Alan Lelchuk

40 DANIEL T. RODGERS **UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS** *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* by Stuart M. Blumin

43 MORTON KONDRACKE **WASHINGTON DIARIST: SERMONS** What George Bush would have heard if he had gone to church on New Year's Eve.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 202, Number 6, Issue 3,916, February 5, 1990. (Printed in the U.S. on January 17, 1990.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 8 & 15, July 9 & 16, July 30 & Aug. 6, Aug. 20 & 27, and Sept. 10 & 17, 1990) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $59.97; foreign, $89.97; Canada, $74.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1990 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®
FROM WASHINGTON

Invidious distinction

Now here's something strange. One of last year's big Supreme Court cases concerned a minority set-aside program for city government contracts in Richmond, Virginia. The Court ruled the program unconstitutional. And the Bush Administration heralded that decision as a great victory: the beginning of a long-awaited rollback of reverse discrimination. This fall, though, two cases reached the Court involving blatant reverse discrimination policies at the Federal Communications Commission. In one case the lower court had upheld the reverse discrimination. Yet the Bush Administration urged the Supreme Court not to hear the cases.

Why? The arguments offered in the Administration's briefs are wan. There are two possible genuine explanations. One is that the Administration worried it would lose, that the objectionable FCC policies would be upheld. But this is unlikely. The Richmond case was decided by a robust 6-3. The differences between the FCC's reverse discrimination and Richmond's are small in practice and almost non-existent in principle.

The other possibility is that the Administration worried it might win. After *Webster*, last year's abortion case, the Bush people may not be in the mood for any controversial triumphs of their own alleged principles. What's more, of all forms of reverse discrimination, these FCC policies—which amount to the anointing of black millionaires by awarding them valuable broadcast licenses—are the ones to which Republicans traditionally object the least. Create a millionaire and you may have created a Republican. Or so they hope.

Yet of all forms of reverse discrimination, these FCC policies are the least justifiable. The Supreme Court may think so, too, because it ignored the Administration and took the cases for a ruling this spring.

One of the policies at issue awards minorities and women extra points in the commission's complicated system for measuring the worthiness of rival applicants for broadcast licenses. The other allows broadcasters whose licenses have been challenged (and who therefore risk losing them completely) to sell them to companies with a "significant minority ownership interest" at three-quarters of their market value. A third FCC policy, not challenged at the moment but equally insane, gives a tax break to people who sell broadcast stations to minorities—who presumably get a better deal as a result.

Of all the minorities and women in our society, the ones least likely to need a leg up are those who are in a position to own a broadcast company. There are really only two categories of people taking advantage of these rules: those who are already well-to-do, and those who are simply fronting for white businessmen. Many are prominent black civic leaders. Others are spouses of wealthy broadcast owners. Democratic Party chairman Ron Brown acquired ten percent of a lucrative Washington FM radio station last year in a "tax certificate" sale. An energetic NEW REPUBLIC reporter was unable to get a straight answer from Brown about how much money he actually had to put up.

Once they obtain a license, minority owners are under no special obligation to put on minority-oriented programming. And they are free to sell the license almost immediately to anyone they want, white or black, male or female, at full market price. Of course, the same is true of white males who acquire broadcast licenses. The man who brought the FCC's "distress sale" policy to the Supreme Court, complaining of reverse discrimination, simply wants to be handed a fortune on a platter himself.

The right question, then, is not whether the government should give preferential treatment to minorities and women when giving away licenses worth millions of dollars. The question is why the government is engaged in such a foolish practice in the first place. Why not auction them off, as reformers have been urging for decades?

Although these FCC policies are an extreme example, a version of the same question hangs over many affirmative action/reverse discrimination debates in our society: Should the advantage being fought over exist in the first place? Wouldn't we be better off trying to reduce the hierarchies and inequalities, rather than quarreling over who gets the advantages of them? An FCC comparative hearing is a parody of the meritocratic process, weighing the qualities of rival license applicants with mock scientific precision: "The Board gave petitioner a '79.2% full-time plus

continued on page 42

What makes bureaucrats so bureaucratic?

We've all asked that question. Now a leading scholar argues that they're not. From the U.S. Army to the Social Security Administration, Wilson shows how red tape is an essential outgrowth of our ingrained mistrust of power and explains why governmental reforms seldom bring their intended results.

"A sprightly, irreverent, and profoundly serious inquiry as to how you make a nation work."–*DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN*

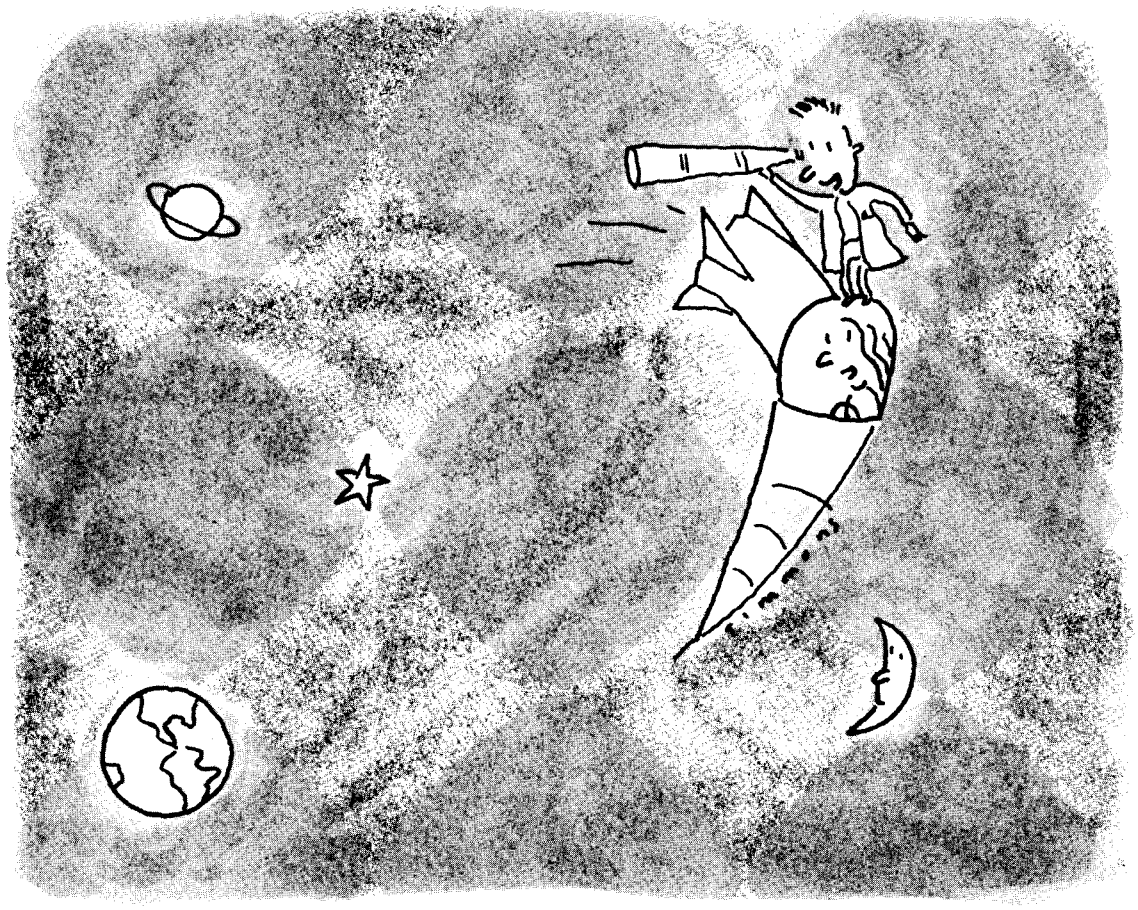
"It is unlikely that anyone in the foreseeable future will master so much research about so many agencies at governmental level."
–*TOM PETERS, The Washingtonian*

BUREAUCRACY
WHAT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES DO AND WHY THEY DO IT
★
JAMES Q. WILSON

$24.95 at bookstores or call toll-free (800) 638-3030.
Major credit cards accepted. Available in Canada from Harper & Collins

BASIC BOOKS **BASIC BOOKS, INC.** 10 East 53rd Street, New York 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Consider The News From A Whole New Perspective.

Journey beyond the headlines to a world of news and knowledge on National Public Radio's All Things Considered.

Whether it's a superpower summit or an expedition to the top of Mount Everest . . . we give each story something that's missing from most news broadcasts . . . time.

The time we take makes All Things Considered a different kind of news . . . refreshingly intelligent and insightful . . . with commentary that challenges and ideas that energize.

Take a journey through today's news . . .

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED®

We Think You'll Find The Difference Considerable.

Check local listings for your public radio station or call NPR at (202) 822-2323.

National Public Radio® News

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Men of the 54th

To the editors:

James M. McPherson's "The 'Glory' Story" (January 8 & 15) shows unusual honesty in treating the subject of black servicemen in the Civil War. As one who inquires into the local history of Amherst, Massachusetts, I too have been drawn into the drama of some of the men of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

In 1863 and 1864, 22 black men (including a father and his son) living in Amherst or nearby towns enlisted into the 54th and the 55th volunteer regiments, and the 5th Massachusetts Cavalry Regiment—all-black units with white officers. Ten of these joined the 54th. Eight returned after the war, of whom one was wounded in action, and another was discharged after suffering a self-inflicted wound. Two died "at the South"—one killed in action and the other died of wounds in a military hospital. The daily life of the "grunts" included ancient rations, disease, delayed pay, too much "fatigue" duty of digging holes and unloading supplies, and always being selected for high-casualty military operations.

Today the only indications of this aspect of Amherst's history include the marble tablets with soldiers' names hidden behind the wall lockers in the basement of the Town Hall, and a small marker in the black section of the West Cemetery inscribed, "In memoriam to five Amherst Unknown Civil War Veterans."

JAMES AVERY SMITH
Amherst, Massachusetts

Cancer wars

To the editors:

As Bruce Ames and other scientists point out, the natural cancer-causing agents in the American diet appear to outnumber the synthetic kind by a volume factor of hundreds or thousands. Robert Bazell ("Cancer Warp," December 18) does not dispute this, but he cites what might be called the fallback alarmist position on food safety: that (1) artificial carcinogens are much more lethal, because humans have evolved ways to resist the natural kind; and (2) however tiny the cancer risk from additives and pesticides, it is somehow needless and avoidable in a way that the natural risks are not. Both premises are shaky.

Plenty of natural carcinogens have been shown to cause not merely in vitro cell and gene changes, but literal cancer in rats and mice. One survey found that of 390 suspect chemicals tested, 60 percent of the synthetic and 45 percent of the natural turned out to cause cancer in lab animals.

Many natural toxins are defenses by creatures that wish not to be eaten against creatures like us who wish to eat them. To assume that we have evolved full resistance is to take an eccentric, "history is over and we've won" view of the Darwinian arms race. We may be selected for immunity to food hazards, but spoilage bacteria are selected for new and better toxins. Cultivation improves our odds, but as Ames points out, "the human diet has changed drastically with historical time": wide-scale exposure to many common foodstuffs goes back only a few generations or centuries. One might as well hope to build up resistance to tobacco.

Oddest of all is the notion that it's easier to reduce the sliver of synthesized risk than the vast wedge of naturally present risk. If the aim is to avoid carcinogens in one's diet, far bigger gains are to be had by pulling a hamburger off the grill before it gets too brown and laying off the stronger sorts of mustard and horseradish than by paying double for produce in order to avoid parts-per-billion residues of bug spray.

This topic seems to make many environmentalists squirm. Maybe it's because they keep trying to frame this as a public health issue, as does Bazell, when for many of us it looks a lot like a matter of private choice.

WALTER OLSON
Brooklyn, New York

To the editors:

Robert Bazell refers to a statement by Dr. Devra Lee Davis suggesting that naturally occurring carcinogens pose little threat because we have evolved ways to resist them. Most cancers, however, kill after childbearing age, and the susceptible genes are thus passed on to successive generations.

JOHN DIEHL
San Francisco, California

The last drop

To the editors:

TNR's comment on the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement (Notebook, December 25) and price-gouging by U.S. coffee processors was right on the mark. However, the cost to the American consumer pales in comparison to the price borne by Colombia and U.S. drug policy.

Colombia stands to lose as much as $500 million in annual revenues from the drop in coffee prices. This may not sound like much, but it is more than three times the amount of anti-narcotics assistance that the United States will provide Colombia in the current fiscal year.

Many Latin Americans, including Colombians, believe the United States deliberately scuttled the negotiations to renew the agreement. Whatever the truth of this claim, one thing is clear: U.S. negotiators should have tried to keep all the parties at the table, if only to retain the status quo, thus maintaining the revenue flow for Colombia and the other countries desperately fighting the drug cartels. The Bush Administration should seek an immediate reinstatement of the coffee agreement, as Colombian President Barco has requested. Unfortunately, it resists even this simple step.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Catholic Catholics

To the editors:

In her review of Mary Gordon's *The Other Side* ("Last Exit to Queens," December 18), Pearl K. Bell is surely correct in saying that America has produced few Catholic novelists of quality. Gordon is not an exception to that generalization. Her Irish Catholic world is a wooden caricature. However, Bell overlooks one truly great artist who is also a realistic, unsentimental, and profoundly Catholic writer. It was, I think, Edmund Wilson who referred to Edwin O'Connor as one of the most unappreciated of major American novelists. I know it was Wilson who said that O'Connor's financial success was so conspicuous that reviewers were unwilling to acknowledge him as the first-rate writer he was. Best known for his hugely successful *Last Hurrah*, O'Connor's *Edge of Sadness* "exploited with seriousness, intelligence and intimate knowledge," as Wilson put it, the Irish Catholic world of Boston. Of course, O'Connor also loved that world even while he portrayed its sometimes narrow and hypocritical confines. O'Connor both teaches and delights, while Gordon appears mainly to be working out her own hostilities. Ideology thus triumphs over art, and for just this reason Gordon is not really a catholic Catholic writer at all, as both O'Connor and Flannery O'Connor so assuredly were.

LEIGH D. JORDAHL
Decorah, Iowa

To the editor:

Pearl K. Bell's review was puzzling in its contrast of Jewish and Catholic writers in

continued on page 42

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

FEBRUARY 5, 1990

LIBERTY OR UNION?

Nationalism, like religion, was a primitive superstition that communism was supposed to cleanse from the human consciousness and deposit in the dustbin of history. Now, it appears, nationalism will cause the practical undoing of communism, much as religion has helped to destroy communism's spiritual basis, such as it was. So far in Eastern Europe, nationalism has been tempered by self-discipline, by the realistic prospect of democracy, and by Mikhail Gorbachev's epochal decision to let the satellite states go their own way while he struggles to repair his government's relations with its own people and with its Western interlocutors. Except in Romania, there has been little violence in Eastern Europe. There is steady movement almost everywhere toward independence and non-Communist rule. Several of the new governments have demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and negotiations with Moscow to that end have begun. Those negotiations are real, which means they will be difficult. Vaclav Havel has even broached the subject of Czechoslovakia's membership in the Warsaw Pact. (Perhaps he has decided to be his country's president in the same way he was its leading dissident: by behaving as if he were already free.) For reasons we will get into, independent democracy is not yet a done deal in Eastern Europe. But the signs in most places are good.

This is not so in the Soviet Union itself. To the surprise of observers both sympathetic and unsympathetic (the scholarly exceptions, such as Harvard's Richard Pipes and Helene Carrere D'Encausse, author of the prescient 1981 book *Decline of an Empire: The Coming Breakup of the Soviet Empire*, tended to be ignored as cranks or abused as dangerous), Communist rule never remotely succeeded in replacing ethnic and nationalist impulses in the republics that make up the U.S.S.R. Nor did Soviet patriotism. "Socialism" might have done the job, but there, as everywhere, it has been a dismal economic failure. The Soviet Union is and always has been a federation of antagonists held together by terror of the central government. Lift the fog of fear, as Gorbachev has begun to do through *glasnost*, and centripetal forces—that's a euphemism for "hatreds"—snap into focus.

The Lithuanian people detest being part of the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijanis do too, but they hate their neighbors, the Armenians, even more. Gorbachev has shown signs of being able to distinguish between these two forms of hatred and the means necessary to handle them. The question is whether he will understand that the difference means the Baltic states must have their independence. The Soviet leaders have acknowledged the illegitimacy of the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact by which the Baltics (along with eastern Poland and the Romanian province of Moldavia) were swallowed into the Soviet Union. In view of that, it would seem impossible for Gorbachev to justify avoiding the logical next step, which is to let the Baltics go free. But he was troublingly ambiguous about his intentions during his extraordinary mid-January trip to Lithuania. At times he pleaded for the Union; at other times he said his own leadership was on the line and warned that Lithuanians would suffer economically without a link to the Soviet Union. He bullied ("You are going nowhere. You can't leave the Soviet Union"), but he also mentioned the possibility of some form of national referendum. And in a departing aside of great potential importance, he said pointedly that it would be "no tragedy" if the U.S.S.R. developed into a multiparty state.

If Gorbachev's goal was to demonstrate to his Politburo colleagues that Lithuania is already too far gone to be yanked back without a cataclysm, his trip was a smashing success. But if his true aim was what he said it was—to persuade the Lithuanians and their neighbors to settle for some revamped form of federation or even confederation—he came home empty-handed. The Baltic peoples want out, regardless of the consequences to themselves, to Gorbachev, or to Soviet unity. Gorbachev will either have to let them go or crush them. If he crushes them—if he crushes any of the historic peoples within the present borders of the Soviet Union—then, for those peoples at least, *perestroika* will have ended in blood and iron. And the United States and Western Europe will have to change their calculations accordingly.

Last summer in Wyoming, Secretary of State James

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Baker suggested to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze the obvious solution: holding referenda on union in the republics seized in 1939. Gorbachev presumably could claim that other regions not so seized are "organic" to the Soviet Union and are bound to it as the Confederate states were bound to the American Union in 1860. The analogy is a stretch, to say the least. The freely elected legislatures of the original American states ratified the Constitution, and the other states joined by application. History may yet accord Gorbachev the status of a Eurasian Abraham Lincoln for allowing the peoples of Eastern Europe their emancipation. But in the Soviet case, unlike the American, liberty and union are not one and inseparable. On the contrary, they are opposites. And the union Gorbachev defends has far less legitimacy, popular or historical, than Lincoln's did. At that, it took Lincoln five years of unprecedented bloodshed to restore order.

Soviet troops are already in Azerbaijan, and we would not be surprised if they had to fight "volunteers" from neighboring Iran before anti-Armenian pogroms are stopped. Contemplating the prospect of warfare between the Red Army and Khomeini-influenced Islamic militants, one is tempted to affirm the existence of a just God. But there is no justice for the victims of this interethnic violence. And in Azerbaijan the role of Soviet troops more closely resembles that of the British in Ulster than, say, that of the Soviets in the Hungary of 1956. But such are the wages of the imperial pretension.

Nor is Azerbaijan the only potential flashpoint. Other Soviet-ruled peoples also have different cultures, separate languages, distinctive histories, and a sense of independent destiny. The Red Army could be dispatched tomorrow to Georgia, or to Kazakhstan—or to the Ukraine, with its 51 million inhabitants and its farms that provide Moscow's daily bread. That would mean civil war. And civil war, among its other costs, would further devastate the feeble Soviet economy—thus creating still further discord.

It may be that Gorbachev will ultimately decide to let all the dissonant republics go their own way and try to consolidate a smaller, leaner power centered on old Muscovy. But even that minimalist solution would be problematic: the Soviets would still have to choose between watching interethnic bloodbaths and foreign meddling engulf their old territories, or intervening. And, of course, it's far from clear that Gorbachev could survive to preside over the partial dismantling of the Soviet motherland.

What would some form of Terror in the Soviet Union do to Eastern Europe? It would appear that Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary are already too far out of the Soviet orbit to be recaptured even if the worst happened tomorrow. This is not to say that they are safely democratic and wholly free from the danger of an authoritarian domestic clampdown if civic order seemed endangered. Despite the glorious revolution of 1989, President Havel of Czechoslovakia is still the only democratic head of state in Eastern Europe, and even he was not popularly elected. With the exception of Poland's relatively powerless senate, no Eastern European parliament has a non-Communist majority. And below the ministerial level, the bureaucracy remains everywhere under old guard control.

In Hungary Socialists (the renamed Communists) run the government and retain massive assets with which to influence the elections scheduled for March 25. In January the opposition unveiled evidence that the Hungarian state security service continues to tap phones, open mail, keep files, and pass political intelligence to government (that is, Socialist Party) leaders. Poland has Solidarity and the Roman Catholic Church to guarantee its liberty, but Communists still control the "strategic heights"—the Interior Ministry and the military. President Wojciech Jaruzelski has declared that "contingency plans exist" in case economic unrest requires martial law. Censorship still exists: Solidarity's own newspaper could not print parts of an interview in which Zbigniew Brzezinski discussed the general collapse of communism. It took Lech Walesa's personal intervention to change the management of Gdansk's government-controlled TV channel so the country's opposition leader could get believable news. Solidarity has 17 of its officials sitting atop government ministries, but below their level, again, old Communists run the offices.

East Germany is less safely democratic yet. Communists still hold top government posts and run the bureaucracy, the opposition is inexperienced and fractured, and periodic public disturbances furnish the government with excuses to impose *Ordnung*. It is still not clear to what extent the political police in East Germany, with more than 100,000 informers, 90,000 employees, an arsenal of 250,000 weapons, and 2,000 offices and listening posts, have been dissolved. The Communist government, which has charged Erich Honecker with treason, plainly wants to maintain the internal security apparatus he perfected. Bulgaria and Romania still are largely under the control of Communists. Yugoslavia is liable to fly apart, with Croatia and Slovenia becoming democratic while Serbia remains authoritarian.

The ultimate guarantors of Eastern Europe's liberty are the hundreds of thousands of people who have shown their willingness to pour into the streets when needed to support democratic demands, and who no longer need fear that the military will fire on them. There is every reason to think that "people power" will triumph in Eastern Europe. True Western-style democracy will still take some learning, especially for old Communists who are likely to emerge as managers and owners of newly privatized enterprises and who will remain part of the ruling establishment of their countries.

In the Soviet Union proper, the prospects for a peaceful transition to democracy are far grimmer. The explosion of civic freedom—the unshackled press, the outpouring of banned books, the new liberty of religious observance, the multicandidate elections, the debates in every venue from street corners to the Supreme Soviet—has been heartening and astounding. Union-wide elections for local officials are scheduled for March, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it is safe to predict that the Communist Party will suffer fresh humiliations. Under Gorbachev the ideological basis for a revival of Leninist-Stalinist totalitarianism has suffered the coup de grace. The inexorable march of History, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the vanguard party supervising the glorious construction of the commonwealth of the New Soviet Man, "scientific socialism": these murderous fantasies are stone dead. But if the ideological roots of Communist totalitarianism have withered, many of its institutions—the KGB, the army, the apparatus of industrial command—remain essentially intact, poised to restore the old order without the old ideology. The roots of Russian authoritarianism run strong and deep, as the essays by Liah Greenfeld and Walter Laqueur in this issue of TNR make clear. Russian nationalism bodes no better for Russian democracy than do the peripheral nationalisms of the Soviet Union for Soviet unity. Nor is nationalism the only obstacle to a happy outcome for Gorbachev's dizzying experiment in seat-of-the-pants reform; it must also contend with obscurantist populism, with anti-"Russophobia," with the centuries-long habit of obedience, and with the lack of traditions to sustain—or of elite and popular understanding to operate—democratic and market mechanisms. It's a dark picture, and all that lightens it is the undeniable fact that so much that was inconceivable five years ago and unlikely six months ago has somehow, against all odds, come to pass.

NOTEBOOK

BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP: For the Bush Administration, one of the welcome side effects of the Panama invasion was the eclipse of its mendacity about China. Secretary of State James Baker told a large, gratuitous lie on "This Week with David Brinkley" when he said the December visit by Assistant Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft was "the first time we've had high-level United States officials go to the People's Republic of China." As we now know, the first secret overture took place over the Fourth of July weekend—one month after martial law was declared, and only days after an executive ban on high-level exchanges with the People's Republic—when Eagleburger flew to Beijing. In defense, White House spokesmen put forward a preposterous distinction between "exchanges" and "contacts." When that didn't wash, they tried the line that Eagleburger's trip was meant to "personally underscore" American "shock and concern." If so, why was it kept secret? First Bush and Baker should tell the truth about what Eagleburger was up to. Then they should apologize for lying about it.

BODYBUILDING BLUES: A regular at the downtown Washington YMCA reports that Lee Atwater's talent for nuisance-making is not limited to negative campaigning. Most mornings Atwater raises a ruckus in the weight room, bellowing out snatches of the R&B songs he listens to on his Walkman while pumping iron. But lately the Republican national chairman has demanded that, while he's working out, the gym staff replace the usual piped-in aerobic disco with tapes of his own jam sessions with B. B. King and Isaac Hayes. And he makes them play it *loud*. The tapes are pretty good, but still: talk about chutzpah! Can we soon expect a Jane Fonda-style workout videotape, complete with Willie Horton visuals? •

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

UNKINDEST CUT

By Fred Barnes

Judging by appearances, President Bush isn't concerned enough about Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's proposal for cutting Social Security taxes to discuss it publicly. When correspondent Wyatt Stewart of CBS raised the subject on January 12 as Bush left a schoolhouse in Cincinnati after a talk, the President ignored him. Bush hustled off to a speech before the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, then to a private, 15-minute session with the parents of PFC James Markwell, an Army Ranger killed during the invasion of Panama. The parents read Bush a poem Markwell had written, at age 16, about being in the military and a letter he'd sent just before shipping out to Panama. The letter brimmed with pride and patriotism. Bush was overcome. He got teary.

The appearance of nonchalance toward Moynihan's scheme was deceiving. The White House, if not exactly terrorized by the proposal, is anxious. On December 29, the day Moynihan announced his plan, budget director Richard Darman and John Sununu, the White House chief of staff, broached the issue with their boss. Darman and Sununu expressed strong opposition, and Bush agreed. After New Year's, the issue began to pop up daily at the 7:30 a.m. senior staff meeting. And Vice President Dan Quayle joined the opponents, while warning Bush about a potential "hemorrhage" of Republican defectors in Congress.

By mid-January Quayle's prediction seemed to be coming true. Moynihan didn't yet have public support from a single Democrat on Capitol Hill, but "conservatives were flocking on board," said a Bush aide. House Republican Whip Newt Gingrich and GOP Representative Henry Hyde spoke favorably about slashing Social Security taxes. On January 10 the Heritage Foundation issued a two-page paper endorsing the Moynihan measure. "The White House should join other champions of economic growth in endorsing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Moynihan tax cut," Heritage said.

The White House isn't about to. On January 7 Sununu denounced the Moynihan proposal on "Face the Nation." He said the Senator is advocating what he'd opposed earlier as a member of the Social Security Commission that recommended increasing the payroll tax rate. "If this Democrat effort to undo what was part of that commission agreement is a first step, we'd be concerned about a follow-up in cutting Social Security benefits," Sununu said. "So we want to avoid any cut in Social Security benefits at all." On January 11 Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater declared that Bush opposes "changing Social Security, period." Democrats, he said, "seem to want to fiddle around with the Social Security system. We do not."

Though Fitzwater's put-down attracted considerable news coverage, apprehensiveness at the White House grew. On January 12 officials moved to a higher level of readiness. Darman rushed from the senior staff meeting to cobble together "talking points" for senior officials to use in combating Moynihan. An hour later he returned for a meeting in Sununu's office with a one-page memo. The proposal, he wrote, is a "political ploy." (Moynihan admits as much.) Darman said that three things can result from passage of the Moynihan cut, all bad: a tax increase to offset the lost revenue, a reduction in Social Security benefits, or abandonment of efforts to shrink the deficit.

Armed with Darman's memo, Michael Boskin, the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, left to tape "CNN's Evans and Novak." Guess what he said? If the Moynihan bill passes, "one of three things has to happen. We give up all hope of meeting the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings targets and just forget about deficit reduction . . . or we'll have to cut benefits or we'll have to raise taxes." Boskin insisted that to offset the $55 billion revenue loss that Moynihan's cut would cause in 1991, any tax hike would hit "the average taxpayer."

In his wildest dreams Moynihan couldn't have imagined that his proposal would drive Bush and his aides into such a tizzy. He concocted it after reading Michael Kinsley's TRB column of three issues ago ("A Liberal Tax Cut") outlining the case for cutting payroll tax rates. Moynihan's true goal is not a tax cut, however. He wants the Bush Administration to stop counting the surplus ($52 billion in 1989) in the Social Security trust fund in calculating the budget deficit. This makes the deficit seem smaller than it really is ($152 billion, as against $204 billion if the surplus isn't counted).

Moynihan's larger aim is to prevent the Administration from borrowing from the surplus to pay for current programs. He argues, correctly, that the surplus was created by the Social Security Commission to make certain there will be funds to pay benefits to retired baby boomers in the 21st century. Moynihan's bill would roll back the flat rate paid by all American workers from 7.65 percent to 7.51 percent, where it was last year. In 1991 he would drop the rate to 6.55 percent. These cuts would eliminate the surplus, thus denying the Administration a pool of funds from which to borrow. If the Administration wants to retain current programs, it should raise taxes to finance them, according to Moynihan.

This, of course, is what scares the White House about the Moynihan proposal. Bush has pledged not to raise taxes. He hopes, in seeking re-election in 1992, to boast of resisting higher taxes, or at least of not having allowed personal income tax rates to rise. Should the Moynihan bill pass, a White House official says, it would probably be part of a package that includes a cut in the tax rate on capital gains, creation of a new individual retirement account, and a tax rate hike. That would be tough to veto. "The cleverness of Moynihan's proposal is that it's an attempt to force the President to violate his no new taxes pledge under the guise of a tax cut," says William Kristol, Quayle's chief of staff. "But it's not clever enough."

What worries the White House is that maybe it is. Maybe it's so politically appealing that it will steamroller the opposition. Darman, for one, was a lowly aide at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1971 when Representative Wilbur Mills proposed a 20 percent hike in Social Security benefits. The Nixon Administration opposed it sternly, but it caught fire and passed easily. President Nixon quickly fell in line. He signed it triumphantly, as if the idea had been his. Bush could do something similar, but the cost would be the ruination of his tax and budget plans for the rest of his term.

For the time being Bush is willing to take the political risk of opposing a tax cut that would save, say, $550 for a couple making $50,000 a year. This represents an amazing role reversal on tax cuts. Since Kemp-Roth emerged in 1978, the tax cut issue has belonged to Republicans. Democrats, as their best issue, have screamed against alleged GOP attempts to cut Social Security benefits. Now Democrats want—one Democrat wants, anyway—to cut taxes, and Republicans are stirring fears of benefit reductions. Some Administration officials are uncomfortable with this. When interviewed by ABC News, Jack Kemp, Bush's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, refused to declare himself against the payroll tax cut.

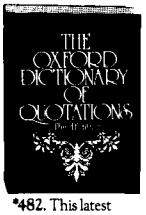
The Administration's strategy, devised by Darman and Sununu, is containment—contain the issue inside the Beltway. By playing up the possibility of cutting benefits, the White House is angling to frighten other Democrats away from Moynihan. The same argument is being used to lure the old folks' lobby, particularly the influential American Association of Retired Persons, into vocally opposing Moynihan. If Moynihan is isolated from his natural allies, his proposal won't reach a critical mass and will die inside the Beltway. At any rate, that's what Darman and Sununu figure. But should Moynihan pick up enough support to make cutting the payroll tax rate an issue outside Washington, the game is over. Pressure for the cut will be too great, and the White House will have to yield.

The related task of Bush aides is to bar Moynihan from collecting unnatural allies, i.e., conservatives. Be-

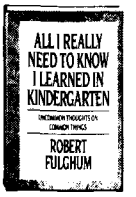
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tres Libros por Tres Dolares and a Farewell to Commitment. No Bull.

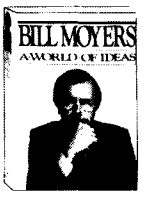
198. QPB's specially produced volume of Woody Allen's three hilarious books.
(3-in-1 vol.)
QPB: $12.95



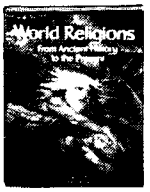
*482. This latest edition of the famous dictionary has 40,000 memorable quotations.
Hardcover: $45
QPB: $18.95



253. Fulghum's premise is that we learned the important lessons by age 5.
Hardcover: $15.95
QPB: $7.95

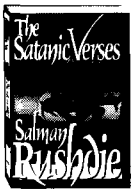


182. Moyers talks about everything from morality to science.
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $15.95



601. The evolution of beliefs throughout history. Illustrated.
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $12.95

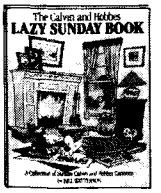
*330. An award-winning food writer offers more than 600 recipes for your microwave oven.
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $9.95



*406. "A rollercoaster ride over a vast landscape of the imagination."—*London Guardian.*
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $9.95

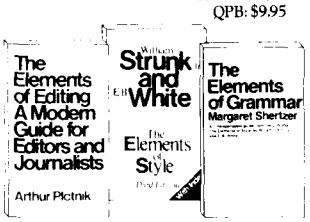
Ernest Hemingway

*447. A hilarious new collection from the author of *Lake Wobegon Days.*
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $9.50



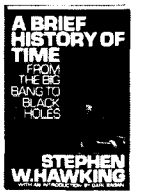
204. Relax with Calvin & Hobbes in this new full-color collection of Sunday cartoons.
QPB: $7.95

*256. What to write, how to write it, where to sell it.
Hardcover: $27.95
QPB: $13.75


The Elements of Editing A Modern Guide for Editors and Journalists
Arthur Plotnik
Strunk and White
The Elements of Style
The Elements of Grammar
Margaret Shertzer

109. A special QPB trio: *The Elements of Style, The Elements of Grammar, The Elements of Editing.*
3-volume set
QPB: $10.95

207. A beguiling novella that asks: How do you thank a man who won't be thanked?
QPB: $5.95



*321. Stephen Hawking offers a convincing big picture of the origins of the cosmos.
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $9.50

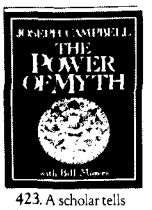
(Translation: 3 books, 3 bucks. No commitment. No kidding.)

No matter who says it, it's an amazing deal—any 3 books from this page for just $3 (plus shipping and handling). After that you don't have to buy any more books ever.

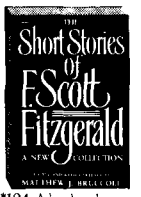
You'll receive the *QPB Review* 15 times a year (about every 3½ weeks). It lists our selection of fiction, history, science, biography plus excerpts, reviews, photos and anecdotes. And QPB softcover books are priced at up to 60% less than their hardcover counterparts. Every book you buy, after this offer, will earn you Bonus Points that can be traded in for free books—you pay just shipping and handling. So set your sights on 3 books and join QPB today.

*117. Over 1600 problem-solving drawings with explanations on every aspect of home repair.
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $12.95

211. Take a trip down Larson's memory lane with over 300 color and black-and-white cartoons.
QPB: $10.95

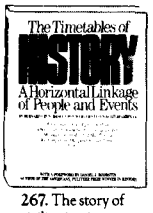


423. A scholar tells how myths have shaped our lives. A PBS TV series.
Hardcover: $27.50
QPB: $15.95



*194. A landmark omnibus collection of 43 of Fitzgerald's best short stories.
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $13.95

178. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned—at least in this bitingly funny novel.
Hardcover: $13.95
QPB: $6.95



267. The story of civilization in a unique chart format.
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $15.95

*716. From the pages of *Rolling Stone*, a documentary of the past 20 years.
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $12.95

297. Soothing therapeutic techniques. 150 graphic photographs.
QPB: $9.50

*QPB Exclusive: The only softcover edition now available.

OK. Send me 3 books for 3 bucks. No commitment. No bull.

Quality Paperback Book Club,® P.O. Box 8804, Camp Hill, PA 17011-8804

Please enroll me in QPB and send me the 3 choices I've listed below, billing me only $1 each, plus shipping and handling charges. I understand that I am not required to buy another book. You will send me the *QPB Review* (if my account is in good standing) for at least six months. If I have not bought at least one book in any six-month period, you may cancel my membership.

0-16

			Indicate by number your 3 choices

Name (*Please print clearly.*) QB127-2-1

Address

City State Zip

QPB Quality Paperback Book Club

Prices are generally higher in Canada. © 1990 Quality Paperback Book Club. All orders subject to approval.

How QPB Membership Works.

Selection: Each *Review* lists a new Selection. If you want it, do nothing—it will be shipped automatically. If you want another book or no book at all, complete the Reply Form always enclosed and return it by the specified date. (A shipping and handling charge is added to each shipment.)

Return Privilege: If the *QPB Review* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit.

Cancellations: You may cancel membership at any time by notifying QPB. We may cancel your membership if you elect not to buy at least one book in any six-month period.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sides Gingrich and Hyde, a number of House Republicans, the National Federation of Independent Business (normally an ally of Republican Presidents), the libertarian Cato Institute, and some officials of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce like Moynihan's tax cut. In backing the cut, the Heritage Foundation even echoed Moynihan's charge that the Administration's use of the surplus to pay for current programs is "thievery."

On January 12 Quayle summoned Hyde for breakfast. Gingrich and Republican Representatives Steve Gunderson and Bob Walker came for lunch. Gingrich hastily slithered away from Moynihan. Walker didn't need any persuasion. The White House decided to leave no opportunity for lobbying unexploited. Quayle, Sununu, and Boskin, along with 14 Senators, were invited by GOP Senator Jake Garn to ski in Utah on Martin Luther King Day weekend. Before they left, a White House aide did a Nexis search for articles by Moynihan on Social Security (to show inconsistencies with his position now). The White House entourage departed with clips, the Darman memo, and other material. No telling what might have come up on the slopes. •

What the 'reindeer rule' hath wrought.

MENORAH WARS

By Michael McGough

Few decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court have been as roundly reviled, by comedians as well as legal commentators, as the Court's 1984 ruling in *Lynch* v. *Donnelly* upholding the constitutionality of a municipally sponsored Nativity scene in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. In that case the Court announced what has become known as the "reindeer rule"—a tableau depicting the Nativity of Jesus doesn't amount to an establishment of religion if it is surrounded by secular symbols of Christmas. (The Pawtucket display included a "Santa Claus house," reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh, candy-striped poles, and figures representing a clown, an elephant, and a teddy bear. All that was missing were the Smurfs bearing gifts for baby Jesus.)

The Court performed an encore in its decision last July in the case of *County of Allegheny, Chabad and City of Pittsburgh* v. *American Civil Liberties Union et al.* Five Justices held that the First Amendment's establishment clause was violated by a Nativity scene in the Allegheny County Courthouse that had not been "junked up" (in the words of one county official) with Pawtucket-like secular decorations. But by a 6-3 vote, the Court upheld the constitutionality of an 18-foot modernistic menorah that for several years had presided over the nearby City-County Building during Chanukah. The menorah is owned by Chabad, a Jewish sect that follows the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Justice Harry Blackmun, one of two justices who voted to approve the menorah display while disallowing the crèche, offered this rationale: although the menorah was "a symbol with religious meaning," its erection on city property could be excused because it was overshadowed by a secular 45-foot Christmas tree, and because it was accompanied by a printed "Salute to Liberty" from then Mayor Richard Caliguiri linking the "festive lights" of the menorah and Christmas tree to the "flame of liberty." Another mitigating factor for Blackmun was that, unlike Christmas, Chanukah lacks a conventional secular symbol.

The "Crèche No, Menorah Yes" decision has come in for as much abuse as the reindeer rule on which it relied. (See "Ignore a Menorah," TNR, July 31, 1989.) Less attention has been paid by the national news media to the way the decision was received on Grant Street, the headquarters of the city and county governments in Pittsburgh and a synonym for the local political establishment.

The story begins on July 3, 1989, hours after the Supreme Court has given its blessing to the menorah that, with one exception, has been displayed in front of the City-County Building since 1982. The lawyer for Sophie Masloff, Pittsburgh's first Jewish Mayor, announces that the city probably will not display the menorah this year. "We're not interested in having the menorah and not having some Nativity scene," explains City Solicitor Dan Pellegrini. "From a social policy point of view, it would not advance any harmony."

Two weeks later Tom Foerster, chairman of the Allegheny County commissioners, says that the county probably will not surround the Nativity scene with Pawtucket-like decorations in order to comply with the Supreme Court's decision. He adds that he is "putting some feelers" out to the owners of downtown office buildings to see if one of them would be willing to display the courthouse Nativity scene, which is owned by the Holy Name Society, a Roman Catholic organization. Eventually the crèche will find a new home in the lobby of the headquarters of Mellon Bank, which also displays a menorah outside its building during the holiday season.

This all would seem like a sensible compromise to a church-state separationist or someone who makes his living parsing Supreme Court opinions about the establishment clause. But storm clouds have been gathering. Since the decision and the city's surprising response, Chabad supporters have been pleading with the Masloff administration to reconsider its plan not to display the menorah. In August, Rabbi Yisroel Rosenfeld, executive director of Pittsburgh's Yeshiva Schools, writes a letter to Lew Borman, the Mayor's liaison to the Jewish community, complaining that banning the menorah from the city's holiday display would "have the result of sending

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a clear message to the populace of this country: that this is a Christian country and others are not welcome."

The rabbi pointedly notes that "our friend, the late Richard Caliguiri" (the Mayor who died in office in 1988) had rejected requests from the ACLU to discontinue the menorah display. Although organizations like the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress oppose menorahs on public property, Borman discovers over the ensuing months that many Pittsburgh Jews agree with Chabad that the Christmas tree the city will continue to display is a religious Christian symbol and therefore should be "balanced" with a menorah. Still, Mayor Masloff holds fast: no menorah.

On December 15 Chabad, joined by three individual plaintiffs, files suit in the U.S. District Court to prevent the city from interfering with its erection of the menorah outside the City-County Building. Echoing an argument that it made in the original case (but that had little effect on the reasoning of either the majority or the minority), Chabad maintains that the city has created a "public forum" in the area in front of the building, a forum from which the symbolic free speech represented by the menorah cannot be barred.

The city regards the invocation of the public-forum doctrine in this case as bizarre. Not so Senior U.S. District Judge Barron McCune, who on December 20—two days before the beginning of Chanukah—issues a preliminary injunction forbidding the city from interfering with the erection of the menorah on the City-County Building steps. The judge stipulates that Chabad adherents will erect the display; in the past city workers did so. For good measure, the judge also orders that the menorah be accompanied by the secularizing "liberty" proclamation, a requirement that is hard to square with the "public forum" theory under which the menorah is Chabad's creature, not the city's. McCune, whose 1986 ruling upholding Grant Street's menorah and Nativity scene was the genesis of the *Lynch* v. *Donnelly* decision, engagingly prefaces his ruling with the comment that "whatever I decide, I will probably be reversed."

Hoping he is right, the city launches the sort of frenzied appeal process usually associated with death penalty cases. In one of many ironies in this affair, the appellate judge from whom the city seeks a stay of McCune's injunction is Senior Judge Joseph Weis of the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, who dissented from a 1988 3rd Circuit decision holding that both the menorah and the Nativity scene violated the establishment clause. This time Weis disappoints supporters of the menorah. On December 21 he stays McCune's order, saying, "I am not convinced that this is a public forum."

The next day, in response to an appeal by Chabad, a panel of the 3rd Circuit agrees with Weis. Undaunted, Chabad asks Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, the Circuit Justice for the 3rd Circuit, to reinstate McCune's injunction preventing the city from interfering with the menorah display. On December 22 Justice Brennan obliges. His action is the second example of judicial role reversal: in the July decision Brennan voted to hold both the Nativity scene and the menorah unconstitutional.

The city promptly appeals Brennan's action to the full Supreme Court. Meanwhile, on December 26, the fourth day of Chanukah, the menorah is erected. Two days later the Court refuses the city's request to stay McCune's order. Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justices John Paul Stevens and Antonin Scalia indicate that they would have granted the city's request.

Chabad has thus succeeded in clothing its portion of the public square, and victory is sweet. But, predictably, Christian Pittsburghers complain that "our" religious display (the Nativity, not the Christmas tree) is now banned from government premises but "theirs" isn't. Such attitudes aren't confined to bigots or radio talk-show types. In Justice Anthony Kennedy's dissent in last summer's "Crèche No, Menorah Yes" ruling, he peevishly asked if "those religions enjoying the largest following must be consigned to the status of least-favored faiths so as to avoid any possible risk of offending members of minority religions."

Then, on the evening of December 28 someone spray-paints "PLO" on the "Salute to Liberty" proclamation that is attached to the menorah. Police say that whoever defaced the sign could be charged with ethnic intimidation and desecration of a venerated object. But wait. What the vandal defaced was not the menorah but rather a sign whose raison d'être was precisely its secular content. The anonymous scrawler could argue that he was acting on the same "public forum" theory advanced by Chabad. If the area in front of the City-County Building is open to free speech, symbolic or otherwise, why should pro-PLO propaganda be excluded?

From this chronicle it is obvious that the combatants in Pittsburgh's menorah wars have been faithful to the spirit if not the letter of recent Supreme Court pronouncements in this area. That spirit is one of dissembling about what is really at stake in the debate over religious displays at government buildings. It is simply not credible that the religious character of a menorah or a reverent depiction of the Nativity can be subsumed in a three-ring-circus celebration of what Justice Blackmun called the "winter holiday season." And it is disingenuous to suggest that the Jews and Christians who rallied round the menorah and the Nativity respectively were motivated primarily by a concern for free speech or an open public forum. What they crave is government acknowledgment of *their* miracles. If all they wanted to do was gaze upon a Nativity scene or menorah in a public place, they could stroll through any of several Pittsburgh neighborhoods—or open an account at Mellon Bank.

Recognizing this, the liberal and conservative wings of the Supreme Court have offered relatively coherent alternatives to the reindeer rule and its progeny. The so-called "accommodationist" view, held by Rehnquist, Kennedy, Scalia, and Byron White, can be traced back

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to Warren Burger's majority opinion in *Lynch* v. *Donnelly*. In that opinion, having likened government religious displays to Presidential proclamations marking Christmas and the Jewish High Holy Days, Burger observed that the fears of religious divisiveness that gave rise to the First Amendment's religion clauses "are of far less concern today. . . . Any notion that these symbols pose a real danger of establishment of a state church is farfetched indeed."

The accommodationist view makes sense if one accepts that the only "establishment of religion" proscribed by the First Amendment is the creation of a national or state church. That is too big an "if" for me, but there is no doubt that a triumph for the accommodationist view would discourage holiday horror shows like the litigation over the miracles on Grant Street. But so would an acceptance by the Court of the counsel of Justice Stevens in his dissent (joined by Brennan and Thurgood Marshall) in last summer's ruling: "In my opinion the Establishment Clause should be construed to create a strong presumption against the display of religious symbols on public property. There is always the risk that such symbols will offend non-members of the faith being advertised as well as adherents who consider the particular advertisement disrespectful."

The life of the law, Holmes said, has not been logic; it has been experience. Pittsburgh's experience suggests that the wiser reading of the law may be Justice Stevens's.

MICHAEL MCGOUGH is editorial page editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.*

The end of California's political gold rush.

THE BUCK STOPS

By Norman J. Ornstein and Mark Schmitt

For the decade since California bequeathed Ronald Reagan to the nation, it has been a relatively quiet player on the national political scene, calmly re-electing pragmatic, moderate officials who appear to lack wider ambitions. But as 1992 approaches, the state is getting ready to set in motion a triple play that could transform the game of politics throughout the nation.

It begins with California's own 1992 elections, which promise to be more numerous, competitive, and costly than any in the history of the state, or any other state. For the rest of the nation as well, the 1992 elections will be stormy and expensive. And because of California's peculiar role in financing political campaigns nationwide, the state's impending turmoil threatens to reshape the system of campaign finance just as we are in the midst of efforts to reform it.

In 1992, for the first time since direct election of Senators began, both California Senate seats might be up for grabs in the same election, along with about a half-dozen brand-new open U.S. House seats and a higher than average number of genuinely competitive House races. The political forces behind this confluence were set in motion last February, when Republican Senator Pete Wilson, whose term expires in 1994, announced that he was running for Governor in 1990. If Wilson wins the statehouse—he is currently the favorite—he will appoint his own successor to the Senate until the next general election, in 1992, determines who will fill the remaining two years of his Senate term.

The seat of California's senior Senator, Alan Cranston, also will be up in 1992. At 78, tainted by the Lincoln Savings and Loan scandal, Cranston is facing pressure within his own party to retire. Whatever he decides to do, California voters would face two highly competitive, extremely expensive Senate races at once.

Dual Senate races have occurred under similar circumstances before, most recently in Minnesota in 1978, when two Republicans replaced two liberal Democrats. But this time they would occur in the biggest and most expensive state in the nation, where even routine Senate races cost twice as much as anywhere else. Further, they would coincide with an upheaval in the state's House delegation caused by redistricting. The 1990 Census will give California six or seven new House seats, which means that nearly one in every eight Congressmen will represent the Golden State. Just as significant, all the existing California Congressional district lines will have to be redrawn in response to the changing population numbers throughout the state.

The process of redistricting—which will involve the new, probably Republican Governor, the almost certainly Democratic legislature, possibly an independent commission, and probably the courts—is unlikely to give either party the advantage that the Democrats obtained in 1982 after the 1980 Census. But by changing the constituency of nearly every one of the state's 45 current Congressmen, then adding several open seats, redistricting could create a large number of competitive races for the first time in a decade—and, at the least, generate panic among incumbents. That in turn will prompt Congressional candidates to spend far more than the $26.3 million they spent in the state in 1988.

To top it all off, the California state legislature is considering a bill that would move the 1992 Presidential primary from June (where it has been irrelevant to the nomination in both parties since 1972) to early March, right after Iowa and New Hampshire but before any other state. Such a move would mean not only that Californians would choose the front-runner for each

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IF YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW

what is happening in Israel— say YES to this FREE trial subscription offer to THE JERUSALEM POST INTERNATIONAL EDITION.

Only THE JERUSALEM POST can give you complete on-the-spot coverage and credible, objective reporting—from journalists who actually live the news.

Each week the most vital, most interesting articles are selected from THE JERUSALEM POST and published into a concise, news packed edition. But you get much more than first-class coverage of Israeli and Middle Eastern events when you receive the International Edition of THE JERUSALEM POST...

- You get incisive analyses of Israel's security and foreign affairs.
- You receive regular informative reports on Israel's economy—including evaluation of business and investment opportunities.
- Travel throughout Israel—sample the festivals, entertainment, restaurants and resorts.
- Enjoy THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE—an intimate view of Israel's people and issues.
- And now receive two additional magazines from Israel free of charge with your subscription to THE JERUSALEM POST—

THE JERUSALEM POST

Peace process: U.S. steps up the pressure

Soviets cool on Peres bid to meet Gorbachev

Intifada 'hit squads' face Arab resistance

Toll mounts as sides dig in

NEWSSTAND PRICES IN LOCAL CURRENCY

Published nine times a year, Israel Scene brings you another perspective on Israel's political and economic scene and a broad view of Israel's people and their culture.

Israeli Democracy is published four times a year and features research and analysis of Israeli politics by Israel's leading academics, writers and public figures.

YOUR FREE TRIAL SUBSCRIPTION

You can't lose. Send in your name and address on the attached coupon and drop it in the mail. You will get three weekly issues—a $6.00 single-copy value—FREE!

Then make your choice when the invoice arrives—mark it "cancel" and pay nothing—or receive an additional 26 weeks (29 weeks in all) for only $19.97. But please don't delay—this offer is for a limited time only.

(Offer valid for new subscribers only.)

FREE TRIAL SUBSCRIPTION COUPON

YES.
Send me three free copies of the Jerusalem Post International Edition.

If I decide to continue, I'll receive an additional 26 weekly issues (29 in all) for just $19.97—a saving of $38.03 off the single-copy cost!

If I decide not to continue, I'll write "cancel" on the invoice when it comes, return it and owe nothing.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY STATE & ZIP

Mail to: The Jerusalem Post International Edition,
P.O. Box 282, Brewster NY 10509-9981

P01BNR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

party's Presidential nomination, but also that no candidate who didn't have at least a million dollars in hand well in advance could even think about running for President.

In the 1980s California came to serve as the political piggy bank for the rest of the country. A few years ago a quick trip to a fund-raiser at Barbra Streisand's Malibu ranch netted an easy $1 million for six Senate candidates, but the entertainment community was only the most visible of the state's money machines. Real estate interests in the Los Angeles area and high-technology entrepreneurs from Silicon Valley bankrolled Senate and Presidential candidates of both parties. Every prospective candidate for the 1992 Democratic Presidential nomination has already made at least one fund-raising trip to California. Senate candidates, aware that 1992 means 34 or 35 contests nationwide, including 13 in which the incumbent squeaked by with less than 53 percent of the vote last time, are gearing up for fund-raising pilgrimages of their own.

But even in California money is not without limits, and in 1992 Californians will want to save more of their cash for their own state. Its last two Senate general elections cost a total of $43 million. With primaries in both parties, two simultaneous elections in 1992 could easily surpass $60 million in spending. If California House candidates could find ways to spend $26 million in 1988, when not one seat changed parties, they could easily lay out $40 million or $50 million in the newly competitive, redrawn districts of 1992. That's $110 million just for Congressional races in California. To put that prudent estimate in perspective, it would be more than all the political action committees put together spent on all the House races in the country in 1988.

Much as a tight supply of money in the economy benefits those who are already rich, a tight supply of campaign money would help the three kinds of politicians who already have it: millionaires willing to bankroll their own campaigns, particularly heirs who don't have to work at the businesses that generated their millions; incumbents, particularly those legislators whose committee spots give them influence over specific industries and make them prime recipients of PAC money; and ideologues on both sides but especially on the right, who can draw on mailing lists of reliable cause-minded donors.

In Congressional races, neither party, on balance, would gain an obvious advantage if money is tight in 1992. But especially if California holds an early primary, the normal pattern of a Presidential race could be turned on its head. Only a very few candidates in either party could think about running for President, which is fine for the Republicans, who presumably already have their Presidential nominee in mind. For the Democrats, though, it would restrict the field to a very few proven fund-raisers: Lloyd Bentsen, Mario Cuomo, Bill Bradley, and perhaps Michael Dukakis. Instead of a few thousand voters in Iowa and New Hampshire, a handful of big donors would winnow the field of candidates—not necessarily a wiser and certainly a less democratic procedure.

With campaign finance reform high on the agenda for this year's Congressional session, the end of the California political gold rush offers warnings and lessons. The bottom line is that politicians in 1992 will be more obsessed with money than ever before. The sight of politicians too consumed with fund-raising to govern effectively has been a driving force behind the push to reform political money. If reform curtails or eliminates PACs, as seems likely, without also freeing up other sources of money, it will result in another of those unintended consequences, worsening the political system's obsession with fund-raising.

If money can't come from PACs, the next source on the list is wealthy individuals, many of whom happen to live in California. California has been one of the few big sources of non-PAC money: nationwide it ranked 37th last year in the percentage of House campaign funds that came from PACs, and the PAC percentage in the Senate race was also among the lowest in the country, despite the staggering costs of that race.

With PACs and California money constrained, campaign finance reform, if it is to work, has to create access to other sources of money—ideally, sources unconnected to special interest privileges or pressures. It should either create new ways for middle-income individuals to contribute easily to campaigns or provide some form of public financing. We could do both by restoring a tax credit for small donations to Congressional candidates, up to perhaps $250, then supplement it by matching the first $100,000 or so of such small contributions to each candidate with federal dollars. The credit and matching funds should apply only to in-state contributions; realizing the havoc that a heavy election year in California could cause, the most valuable reform we could make would be to force candidates to rely on their own constituents for funds, rather than on industries, ideologues, and interest groups concentrated on either coast. These or similar changes would have the added benefit of enhancing competition by helping challengers to get past the threshold of funds that are necessary just to be noticed in a Congressional race.

Attempts to clean up the messier aspects of American politics have often backfired, as the 1974 campaign finance reforms did, with strange and unintended results. In retrospect, it is usually explained that the reforms foundered on unforeseeable circumstances. But the circumstances that could cause many of today's reform proposals to fail are actually quite foreseeable. It is not too early to start thinking about 1992, not when an odd coincidence in a single state could set off a new crisis in campaign finance even before we have figured out what to do about the last one.

NORMAN J. ORNSTEIN is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. MARK SCHMITT is a research associate at AEI.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Romanian junta's familiar look.

NEW MASKS, OLD FACES

By Vladimir Tismaneanu

Revolutions tend to be drawn in black and white. The revolutionaries, naturally enough, tend to romanticize their rebellion's roots, to idealize their victory, and to demonize their enemies. This alone does not make the revolutionaries liars or their revolutions illegitimate. A stylization of history can be essentially true without being true to every detail. But it also can be essentially false, and that is the danger looming in Romania today: that the lineaments of revolutionary change will be used to disguise ideological continuity.

Questions about what is true and false in the story of Romania's revolution begin with the execution of the Ceausescus. As the story is told, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu fled Bucharest by helicopter just after noon on December 22. They were captured by the army later that day. The new government, facing fierce resistance from pro-Ceausescu forces, felt it could not risk a fair (and inevitably prolonged) trial. As long as the dictator and his wife remained alive, their followers might somehow manage to spring them and use them as a rallying point. Hence the quick Christmas executions, a mere acceleration of a certain conclusion. Of course it would have been gratifying to see the Ceausescus on trial, Nuremberg-fashion, their crimes detailed before the world. But circumstances in Bucharest, the new leaders claimed, were too volatile to allow such an approach.

Many Romanian intellectuals think the best solution would have been to skip a trial, with its predetermined outcome, and simply kill the Ceausescus on the spot. Why offer them a chance to defend themselves against the irrefutable? Moreover, as the tape of the trial shows, theirs was a trial in name only. The faces of the prosecutors remain invisible, their names secret. In this sense Romania's new leaders chose the worst of all alternatives: tyrannicide pretending to be law. By attempting to keep the revolution pure, they sullied it.

Such, at any rate, are the various versions of the accepted story. But could there have been more to the regime's action? Did those who ordered Ceausescu killed have a personal interest in his quick and private death? Who are these people who constitute the new regime? And are they using the myth of revolutionary justice and military expediency to hide other motives?

To answer these questions, we must understand the nature of the revolutionary upheaval in Romania. On the one hand, there was undoubtedly a spontaneous revolt from below, the first successful plebeian revolution in the Soviet empire. On the other hand, it seems, there did exist an intra-Party conspiracy, long prepared by disenchanted cadres from the government and the military bureaucracies. This movement was directed narrowly at the Ceausescus and their camarilla. The Party bureaucrats, inspired by Mikhail Gorbachev's reform from above, wanted to humanize socialism, not replace it. By contrast, the grass-roots activists, particularly the student leaders, wanted to dismantle the Communist order and establish a Western-style democracy.

At the moment, judging from the composition of the Council of the National Salvation Front now in control, the Party faction seems to be winning out. Its president, Ion Iliescu, is a seasoned Party apparatchik. Born to a longtime Communist family, he studied in Moscow in the early 1950s, where he socialized with Gorbachev, then a Komsomol leader at Moscow University. In 1956, as chairman of the Romanian Students' Association, Iliescu participated in repressive campaigns against students who expressed their solidarity with the Hungarian revolution. Later he became the leader of the Romanian Communist Youth Union (UTC) and ingratiated himself with Ceausescu to the extent that in early 1971 he became the Party secretary in charge of ideology. True, he refused to abide all of Ceausescu's whims and was gradually marginalized. But his participation in Party activities continued. At the 12th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party in 1979, Iliescu was elected a member of the Central Committee, serving as chief of the Party organization in Iasi. In the 1980s he was appointed chairman of the State Committee for Waters and later director of the Technical Publishing House in Bucharest. Until December 22, 1989, Iliescu did not make any public disavowal of the regime or its leader.

The National Salvation Front chose Virgil Magureanu to read its first communiqué on Romanian television. Magureanu is a professor at the Party academy who for

VLADIMIR TISMANEANU, a resident scholar at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, left Romania in 1981. He is now completing a history of Romanian communism.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the past 15 years has taught scientific socialism, which in Romania meant Ceausescu Thought. The secretary of the NSF Council is Martian Dan, Iliescu's short-lived successor as head of the UTC and former propaganda boss of the Bucharest Communist Party organization. His area of expertise is also scientific socialism.

The first deputy chairman of the NSF Council is Dumitru Mazilu, who in the 1970s served as the commander of the security police school in Baneasa, a township just outside Bucharest. Mazilu held the rank of a Securitate colonel and was one of Ceausescu's speechwriters for more than a decade. He broke with the dictatorship two years ago, when he smuggled out of Romania a report for the United Nations Youth Commission on human rights violations. Placed under house arrest, Mazilu resurfaced immediately after Ceausescu's escape from Bucharest on December 22. On January 12 Mazilu was acclaimed by a Bucharest mob as he histrionically chanted, "Death to Communism." On January 13 the newspaper *România Libera* published Mazilu's true biography, including his tenebrous links with the hated Securitate. Friends of mine who have formed the pro-Western, pluralistic Group for Social Dialogue indicate that many Romanians have misgivings about Mazilu's "Bonapartist" ambitions. Indeed, some intellectuals wonder whether his hysterical performance before the mob was a sign of mental illness, or simply a continuation of his role as a provocateur in Securitate.

The chairman of the commission dealing with international relations is Silviu Brucan, a Party veteran whose dissident record indicates Gorbachevite sympathies. In the 1950s Brucan served as the acting editor of *Scinteia*, the Communist Party's official daily. In the 1970s, with Ceausescu's permission, he published a number of books in the United States (by Praeger Publishers in New York), in which, not surprisingly, he refrained from any criticism of the regime's abysmal human rights record. Even in his latest book, *World*

Street Theater

BUCHAREST

"*Astazi e Craciun, nu mai e nebun*" went the chant. "Today is Christmas, the madman's gone."

The fighting was over in most of the city by the fifth day of the revolution. The Palace Square in front of the former Central Committee building smelled of wet ashes from burned-out buildings. The tanks still had their engines running, but the soldiers, in helmets and long heavy coats reminiscent of World War I, were carelessly walking around accepting food and cigarettes from the people. In the streets and squares thin orange candles stuck in pieces of bread burned to commemorate the dead, a Romanian tradition.

On day six, almost overnight, the task of rebuilding began. In the town center teams of architects assessed the damage. Trucks took away cars flattened by charging tanks. Window glass was replaced. People returned to houses they had evacuated under fire; white flags still hung above the doorsteps.

Inside the TV studios, the National Salvation Front broadcast appeals for calm, declarations of intentions, messages of support from all over the country and from abroad, and reassurances about the city's tap water (it was not contaminated). The broadcasts, at first spontaneous, even chaotic, quickly took shape. The messages of support gave way to communiqués and decrees. At the same time formerly forbidden videotapes of Tina Turner and Michael Jackson were introduced. On December 28 came the first full-length film: *The Great Dictator* (1940), with Charlie Chaplin playing the merciless ruler of a country called Tomania.

The newspapers also changed dramatically—if only because the "he" whose speeches and schedule used to occupy 80 percent of the news hole was no more. Several new dailies appeared, such as the evening *Libertatea* and *Tineretul Liber* (Free Youth). *România Libera* didn't bother to change its already apt title, but it took off the logo "Workers of the World, Unite" and started trying to live up to its name.

The previous Communist Party organ *Scinteia* (Spark) underwent a strange mutation. In the first days of the fighting the word "*Poporului*" (of the people) was added to the title; then the whole thing was changed to *Adevarul*, which means truth. There is a telling precedent to this mutation: Lenin's first newspaper was called *Iskra* (Spark), later to be renamed *Pravda* (Truth).

Adevarul is now a "sociopolitical independent daily." Some 90 percent of its editors are from *Scinteia*, and it is produced in the "Casa Scinteia," a frightful Stalinist wedding-cake of a building in the style of Moscow University. Dumitru Tinu, now deputy editor, told me that "there is no continuation" between the two papers. "The overzealous supporters of Ceausescu simply stopped coming to work, but the majority of us stayed," he said. He saw nothing strange in the fact that the same people who used to praise the "Falcon of the Carpathians" are now eagerly denouncing the vicious tyrant.

For the first two weeks after the revolution, the newspaper's attention was divided between reproducing the decrees, programs, and agendas of the National Salvation Front (in perfectly wooden language); printing formerly forbidden materials (text of the Helsinki agreements, basic facts about Amnesty International, installments from *Red Horizons*, a book by a Securitate defector); and denouncing the Ceausescu clan (a half-page reproduction of Elena's grades when she was ten years old showing that she failed every subject but music, sports, and manual work; a huge document from Ceausescu's son's divorce; numerous photographs of Nicolae's sumptuous palaces).

Trying to make sense of political life by following the press was confusing. Take the formation of the new government: the names of the prime minister, his deputy, and the defense minister were announced nine days before the publication of a decree-law of the National Salvation Front Council that stated: "Romania's government is set up as the supreme body of state administration." How supreme it is was explained in the decree: the council appoints the prime minister, who then proposes the Cabinet that has to be approved by the council. Oh yes, and all decisions of the government can be annulled by the Front if they are considered "contrary to the interests of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Socialism at the Crossroads (1987), Brucan did not directly challenge the disastrous course of Romanian communism. His official break with Ceausescu occurred in November 1987, when he issued a warning against the use of violence to stop working-class unrest in Brasov. Later, in March 1989, he was instrumental in convincing five other Party veterans to sign a letter condemning the president's economic and social policies.

The foreign minister, Sergiu Celac, was until 1978 Ceausescu's personal interpreter for Russian and English, a position that was the equivalent of a directorial office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Celac—a personal friend not only of the new president but also of Stefan Andrei, Ceausescu's long-time foreign minister and until the revolution one of the dictator's closest associates—kept a low profile as an editor of the Scientific Publishing House in Bucharest.

As for the new prime minister, the 43-year-old Petre Roman is a symbol of the "new look" of Romanian communism. Born to a high-ranking *nomenklatura* family, he is the son of the late Valter Roman, a Spanish Civil War and Comintern veteran who, until his death in 1983, was a member of Ceausescu's Central Committee and the director of the Communist Party's publishing house. Petre Roman, who got his Ph.D. from the University of Toulouse in France, is a professor of hydraulic engineering at the Polytechnical Institute in Bucharest. Until December he was an uncritical member of the Romanian Communist Party.

That any one of these former apparatchiks and technocrats should try to return to Romania's post-revolutionary government is perhaps understandable. But that this particular group should come back jointly, to such high positions, is worrisome. Celac and Roman graduated from the same elite Russian high school in Bucharest, and through the years visited frequently with both Iliescu and Brucan. All of these men have belonged to an informal discussion group on the impact

---

the Romanian people."

The obvious next question is the legitimacy of the Front itself. In an interview with Silviu Brucan, a leading member of the council and éminence grise of the new regime, I asked about the mechanisms inside the Front that will prevent it from turning into another dictatorship.

A. The only guarantee I can think of is the development of pluralism inside the Front and outside the Front.

Q. But you are the ones who are setting the rules of the game.

A. That's the product of the revolution.

Q. Yes, but there was no agreement made. Some people just found themselves in the TV studio and became members of the Front, in an ad hoc way.

A. Yes, it's an ad hoc body, but we did it. That's our legitimacy, that we did it.

Q. Does the fact that you fought against a dictator by itself give you legitimacy?

A. Oh yes, the fact that we were the only ones who deposed Ceausescu gives us legitimacy. We could have taken advantage of that. We didn't have to have elections.

Q. But you said yourself that the youth, the students, demanded elections. You have to respect their will.

A. Well, we could reach an agreement with them . . .

Q. But then you would not govern as a legitimate government, you would remain provisional . . .

A. Well, we could manage if we wanted, with such popular measures as food, heating, electricity. Those are much more persuasive arguments than this kind of democratic pluralism. We won because we want real democracy, and we want it because in a modern society there is no other way.

A week after Brucan spoke to me about the Front's legitimacy, the street replied. On Friday, January 12, declared a national day of mourning by the Front, some 3,000 people demonstrated in Bucharest outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building, the Front's headquarters. They chanted, "Down with communism!" "Death for death!" "Who elected them?" "What is the Front hiding?" And: "Down with Brucan!" The demonstration went on for more than 12 hours, which is very impressive in freezing weather and in a country where for decades there was not a single unofficial public meeting.

That evening the president of the Front, Ion Iliescu, the first deputy chairman, Dumitru Mazilu, and the prime minister, Petre Roman, tried to have a dialogue with the crowd while standing on a tank outside the ministry. Iliescu was asked to explain his activity during the past five years (which he did); Mazilu was asked the same (which he didn't).

Late at night the three men appeared in the window of the ministry and announced concessions to the demonstrators by issuing three decrees: calling a national referendum on reintroducing the death penalty, which the Front had abolished two weeks earlier; outlawing the Communist Party; and forming a special commission to deal with complaints of those who suffered under the Ceausescu dictatorship.

The next day's press reaction was the first sign that not all is quiet on the Front front. *România Libera* strongly accused Mazilu of manipulating the crowd and asked that he step down. That same evening during a TV broadcast the three men from the tank declared almost in unison that they should not have given in to the crowd, and they annulled the 18-hour-old decree that outlawed the Communist Party. (Its fate is to be decided by a national referendum.)

In early December Corneliu Bogdan, who had been ambassador to the United States from 1967 to '77, returned to Romania after a fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution's Wilson Center. In late December he took office as deputy foreign minister, but died of a heart attack days later. In a meeting shortly before his death, I asked him the same question that I put to Brucan about the Front and a system of checks and balances. Without hesitating, he said that the watchdog is the street. He didn't know how quickly events would confirm his words.

ANNA HUSARSKA

Anna Husarska is a foreign editor at the Polish independent daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the scientific revolution on contemporary socialism, run by Roman's father and by Mihai Draganescu, a Party technocrat who is now the deputy prime minister.

In one of Iliescu's first interviews, he went out of his way on French television to distinguish the Romanian revolution from the other movements in Eastern Europe. Romania's, he said, was a spontaneous anti-dictatorial outburst, involving no Party faction or plot. But then a videotape was smuggled out of Romania and broadcast on French TV. Clandestinely filmed during the first NSF Council meeting, it showed the new defense minister, Col. Gen. Nicolae Militaru—a man with well-known pro-Soviet leanings—mentioning the existence of this organization for the past six months. When confronted with this embarrassing document, the usually soft-spoken Petre Roman lost his temper and accused the foreign media of slandering the new regime.

But why should these people refuse to acknowledge that a conspiracy existed? Would that not establish their revolutionary bona fides? Why do they need the myth of an unorganized revolt? The likely answer is that they need anti-Communist camouflage. If they admit that a Party plot existed, then their sudden appearance at the balcony of the well-guarded Central Committee building in Bucharest's Palace Square on December 22, 1989, might begin to look more like a pre-emptive Party coup against the people's revolution than the fulfillment of that revolution.

The composition of their NSF Council might come under greater scrutiny as well, with Romanians objecting that former apparatchiks hold most of the key positions while true opponents of the Communist regime have been assigned to largely ceremonial posts. And, finally, Ceausescu's execution might appear not only as a tyrannicide but also as a method of silencing him.

I confess I have a personal reason for believing in this darker version of Romania's revolution. In 1980 I was walking in a Bucharest park with a professor from the Party academy, a man now closely linked to the ruling team. Assuming a confidential voice, he whispered to me: "We are a group that will soon get rid of the Ceausescu tribe." At the time, knowing the man and his institution, I suspected a provocation. But apparently he was telling the truth. There did exist a group who wished to supplant the ruling tyrant and establish their own oligarchy. They did not want to topple state socialism, only to rationalize it. As practitioners of realpolitik, they walked the Byzantine corridors of power, cultivated the narcissistic ego of the general secretary, and waited for their hour to come.

Now it has come. They left it to the students, the workers, the soldiers, and the millions of other Romanians who took to the streets last December to put an end to the Ceausescus. Then, at a critical moment, Iliescu and his associates climbed the crest of the historical wave. No wonder true Romanian revolutionaries have begun to question their leaders' democratic protestations.

Nor is the return of old faces and old voices a phenomenon limited to the top leadership. I have known Corneliu Vadim Tudor since we were sociology students in Bucharest. I have also known him as the official minstrel of the Ceausescu court, specializing in well-paid hosannas. And I have known him as the author of several scurrilous anti-Semitic versifications and racist pamphlets. Then, on December 21, Tudor sent abroad a furious anti-Ceausescu manifesto, denouncing his former idol for being "the most bloodthirsty criminal in Romanian history, a monster worse than Stalin and Hitler—a Balkanic Caligula." Moreover, Tudor argued, the massacre in Timisoara convinced him that "it was not the Russians, the Hungarians, and the Jews who were threatening Romania," but the bloodthirsty tyrant whom he had so lavishly praised only several years ago.

Similar views have been voiced by other erstwhile bootlickers. Mihnea Gheorghiu, who served as president of the Academy of Social and Political Sciences, appeared on Romanian television to express his disgust with Ceausescu's "primitive obscurantism." Constantin Bostina, Ceausescu's former chief of staff, was appointed by the new regime to be deputy minister of the economy and lost his job only under pressure from the student movement. The list of these sunshine patriots could be continued ad nauseam.

In all fairness to the new regime, one should mention that it includes genuine dissidents, such as the art historian Andrei Plesu and the literary critic Mihai Sora, appointed ministers of culture and education, respectively. The State Committee for Radio and Television is headed by the dissident writer Aurel Dragos Munteanu (although plenty of holdovers are still serving on its staff).

Yet no crucial ministry has yet been assigned to someone who really opposed the dictatorship. It is true that given the ubiquity of Ceausescu's cult, one could not find a large contingent of suitable officials untainted by collaborationism. But a sufficient number could be found. Some examples should suffice: the electronics engineer Radu Filipescu, who was arrested in the early 1980s for distribution of anti-Ceausescu leaflets; the literary critic Dan Petrescu, one of the most courageous opponents of the regime; the sociologist Alin Teodorescu, who dared to criticize the anti-Hungarian policies under Ceausescu; the economist Ion Blaga, who in the 1970s refused to serve as the president's economic adviser. In any case, a sense of decency should prevent those who participated directly in the ideological orgies of Ceausescuism from posturing as long-time resistance fighters.

Apart from one's sense of revulsion, though, does it matter? In its initial statement, the NSF pledged to be a transitional government, with no pretense of monopolizing political power. Unfortunately, Silviu Brucan has now announced the NSF's intention to present its own candidates in the April elections. Brucan, who has emerged as the most articulate of Romania's new leaders, said in an interview with the *Financial Times* of London on December 29 that he did not see any reason for the NSF not to enjoy the benefits of its revolutionary victory. But leaders of the newly formed opposition

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

groups—among them the Democratic Party, the Liberals, and the National Peasants—have already expressed their concern that these benefits include the NSF's attempt to set up its cells at workplaces, and thus consolidate its current pre-eminence.

Brucan has also denied that the NSF had any links with the now defunct Romanian Communist Party, and has proclaimed that communism is "irrelevant" in Romania. Yet many Romanians have noticed how, regrouped within the NSF's top leadership, Gorbachev's disciples are revamping their Marxist creed. Knowing how much Romanians execrate the Communist Party, these leaders are striving to rescue socialism by abandoning its Communist image. And they pursue the Bolshevik strategy in which they were schooled: control the media; fragment and isolate the opposition; buy off the rest with promises.

Can the West do anything to help prevent the Romanian revolution from being hijacked? Certainly the Western media should become aware that this is a danger, and strive to identify genuine proponents of democracy in Romania and monitor their struggle against any who might subvert democracy. And private and public organizations should contribute to the democratic parties, as they did to Solidarity, the advice and wherewithal that is needed to conduct a political campaign. Today's Romanians have never known a free election. The danger is that, deceived by communism's "new face," they never will. •

Neo-Stalinists of the New Right.

FROM RUSSIA WITH HATE

By Walter Laqueur

One of the most interesting features of the present intellectual ferment in the Soviet Union is the emergence of a new Russian (as distinct from Soviet) ideology. Unlike the disreputable and internally divided Pamyat, the members of the new Russian right are respectable and highly placed members of the establishment, government officials, writers, scientists, painters. They have their well-wishers in key positions from the Politburo downward, their own literary magazines, *Nash Sovremennik* (Our Contemporary, founded by Gorky), *Molodaia Gvardia* (Young Guard), *Moskva*. Patriotic clubs are proliferating to which people of different persuasion or ethnic origin have no access. This movement resembles an influential Masonic lodge, though the comparison would be strongly resented. Still, the similarity is uncanny: to a young man from the provinces arriving in the capital to gain fame and fortune in the media, in literature, music, or the visual arts, this cabal can bring publicity, open doors, and provide good notices, assuming that our hero subscribes to their doctrine.

In the beginning there was only Pamyat, a group of uniformed thugs that first appeared on the scene in the early 1980s. In order to camouflage their activities, these thugs portrayed themselves as an association for the restoration of churches, graveyards, and other such monuments. The authorities turned a blind eye, but when they realized that Pamyat was not just fanatically anti-Jewish, but also that it would dearly love to hang the Communists and a great many other "anti-patriotic elements," the official attitude became less benevolent. Pamyat and its supporters did not do well in the 1989 elections to the new Soviet parliament, however, and the authorities seem to have decided that instead of banning Pamyat they would encourage a variety of competing groups. Thus, during the past year a great number of local, regional, and nationwide organizations have come into being, with names such as Workers Front, Fatherland, and United Council of Russia, and Rescue (Salvation). All of them preach a return to patriotism, law and order, and other traditional values, and protest against the alleged discrimination of ethnic Russians. The Workers Front is bitterly attacking the (liberal) intelligentsia and demanding that the right to vote should be restricted to the factories—which means, in practice, that the majority of the population would be denied democracy.

This phenomenon of the new Russian right is rooted in the general crisis of Soviet society, in the disappointment with the Party, the unions, and other official organizations. It is a search for new frameworks for action. Although communism has been a bitter disappointment, there is no love for capitalism; there is, on the contrary, resentment against the nouveaux riches (according to some estimates, there are now 175,000 millionaires in the Soviet Union) who made their money not through honest work, enterprise, and inventive-

WALTER LAQUEUR is the author of *The Long Road to Freedom: Russia and Glasnost* (Scribners).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness, but by cheating the Soviet worker, by black market activities, and so on.

Although estimates of the size of the New Right are unreliable, it is significant that at a time when most periodicals and newspapers are losing readers, the circulation of *Nash Sovremennik* has risen by two-thirds. There are some indications, though, that New Right organizations have not been doing too well among the workers. The striking miners and railway workers have pressed very specific social and economic demands that have little in common with the programs of the patriotic societies. The New Right's influence in the lower ranks of the Party and state bureaucracy, in the ranks of those afraid of losing their jobs in a major reform, and in some circles of the intelligentsia seems to be larger.

It is difficult, moreover, to point to any specific class or social group that displays particular affinities for the New Right. The geographical distribution of these notions is easier to establish. Sympathies for the New Right have certainly been stronger in declining regions (beginning with Leningrad), in badly run cities with outdated industries and major ecological problems, and in regions in which there is political and social pressure against the ethnic Russians by local nationalities. Like fascism, the New Right appeals not to any specific group but to the *spostati*, to the dissatisfied people of all classes—of which there are many in the Soviet Union.

According to a remarkable essay by the Moscow writer Mikhail Leontiev, in the Riga weekly *Atmoda*, the doctrine of the extreme right is largely based on fear of the "satanic forces" that undermine everything sacred to the heart of Russian patriots, exploit the people, install local mafias to corrupt the population, instigate social and national strife. Leaders such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Alexander Yakovlev are mere puppets, manipulated by international financial corporations and Zionist billionaires. Old-fashioned fascist or Stalinist doctrine, Leontiev says, would have little effect in the present situation, but as the disorientation of the masses is growing, the appeal of fear is great.

Who are the potential saviors of the Russian people in this hour of grave danger? Pyotr Stolypin's name is mentioned with increased frequency. He was the most capable statesman of the late czarist period, but he has been dead for a long time. Solzhenitsyn's authority is very often invoked. When he was in trouble, the far right attacked him as a traitor, but their attitude has changed over the last year or two (the fact that Solzhenitsyn has written at great length and with much enthusiasm about Stolypin may not be fortuitous). Lastly there is Yegor Ligachev, regarded by many as Gorbachev's main antagonist in the Politburo. We know, from a recent interview, that Ligachev is a great admirer of the writers who are the spokesmen of the right wing, and he shares much of their criticism of the destructive influence of the "liberals" in Soviet political and intellectual life. But Ligachev is also an old Communist; he would not find it easy to give full support to a movement in total opposition to Marxism, to the October Revolution, to the Bolshevik policies since the Revolution.

The emergence of the Russian nationalist movement does not come as a total surprise. Its leading advocates have been publishing their essays for 20 years or more. Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev they had to be much more circumspect; open attacks against Marxism and the old Bolsheviks would have been unthinkable. Today they are quite common. The doctrine of the New Right is, essentially, that the Russian people is gradually becoming a stranger in its own home, that it is biologically and culturally threatened by extinction. This notion rests, in turn, on the assumption that an immensely cunning and powerful enemy has decided to destroy the Russian people, its tradition, and its culture. The enemy consists, above all, of Trotskyites, Zionists, and Masons, but also of anti-Stalinist historians, liberal novelists and playwrights, and advocates of economic *perestroika* who dream of reintroducing capitalism in Russia.

All these are, of course, code words. "Trotskyite" no more refers to Lenin's comrade-in-arms, who has been dead for 50 years, than "Zionist" means the followers of Theodor Herzl; and there have been no Masonic activities in Russia for the past 70 years. In fact, a Trotskyite is a Communist (perhaps a Social Democrat, or even a liberal) who happens to subscribe to an internationalist ideology, be it Marxism or liberalism or some other cosmopolitan creed. In this light, Marx too was a Trotskyite, and so were Lenin and Stalin; and Marx was a Zionist *avant la lettre*, because he was a Jew by origin.

The views of the thinkers of the New Right have been a matter of growing concern to the Soviet reformers, but of less concern to the Party hierarchy, which probably considers them a useful antidote to the "liberals." Fascination seems a more appropriate reaction than horror. There are people of the left and people of the right in every country that allows freedom of expression, and there is no reason why the Soviet Union, if it is to become an open society, should be an exception. Certainly the ideology of the New Right is of great interest to a student of 20th-century European culture; he will be reminded of Maurras and the *Action Française*, of the German *Kulturkritiker* of the right, of Knut Hamsun, and others, not to mention the right-wing thinkers among the Russian émigrés, who now enjoy a great vogue.

Some Russian liberals take a less detached view—Leontiev, for example, in the article quoted above: "The danger of a fascist coup is growing daily in our country, inasmuch as the fascist consensus is not limited to exalted youngsters with swastikas on their leather jackets, but includes representative elements of the creative and technical intelligentsia and strengthens its influence in the political establishment (the Party apparatus, the army, and the security organs)." What if a leading Western intellectual were to express solidarity with the Ku Klux Klan or with Lyndon LaRouche? Would he not be considered beyond the pale?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Members of this "Russian party" have angrily protested against their adversaries' practice of branding them "informers," "fascist," or "para-fascist." They would have a stronger case but for their own unsavory record, the appeals to the Party organs (including the KGB) to "take measures" against liberals and cosmopolitans allegedly undermining the moral of the Russian people. They were in the forefront of the campaign in the 1960s against the monthly literary magazine *Novy Mir*, the main bulwark of liberalism at the time; they asked for Solzhenitsyn's head; they now want to close down *Ogonyok*, the most popular weekly.

The Russian intelligentsia has been cut off for many decades from the rest of the world. Right-wing intellectuals may be genuinely unaware that their "facts" and arguments are not new, that they were widely aired by pro-fascist writers in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s. Perhaps they would be embarrassed to advocate these theories if they knew their antecedents and their consequences. One document widely circulated in right-wing samizdat in Moscow is based, in fact, on speeches made at the Nuremberg rally in 1936. When this became known, there was considerable chagrin; Hitler, Alfred Rosenberg, and Julius Streicher are not considered good company in Russia, even at a distance of 50 years.

Why the sudden preoccupation with the crimes committed by the Bolsheviks against the Russian peasantry and other classes in the 1920s? Surely the confrontation with current problems is even more important; and it is not a little strange to make Sverdlov, Trotsky, and Zinoviev responsible for policies carried out many years after their deaths by Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov, and Voroshilov. It would be convenient if it could be shown that the revolutionaries who caused all the misfortunes to Mother Russia were of alien stock, but this, alas, is not easy to prove. For the Dekabrists (Decembrists) and the Narodovoltsy (radical populists) were no more Jews than Lenin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev (or Mao and Tito). There must have been some, even many, bad Russians who turned against their own people. Perhaps the whole Russian intelligentsia has been following false prophets.

The "Russian party" is not cut of one cloth. The apocalyptic wing, writers such as Vasili Belov, Yuri Bondarev, and Valentin Rasputin, maintain that the Russian people is on the brink of total disaster, that an attempt to save the nation must be made even at this late hour, though it may already be too late. But other ideologists of the extreme right, such as the writer Vadim Kozhinov, are much less alarmist. True, they say, Russia faces very serious internal problems in agricultural production, in its crime rate, in the spread of drugs, in its rebelling minorities. But seen in international perspective, these difficulties are neither unique nor even particularly severe. America has a much greater drug problem, Britain has to cope with the IRA, and so on.

Historically, the "Russian party" consists of two factions that originally differed on matters of principle. There are the Russian nationalists, whose homes are decorated with icons and pictures of Stolypin. They have no sympathy for Marx, who wrote nasty things about Russian history, and they loathe Lenin, a déraciné Russian who had not the slightest interest in, or feeling for, Russian traditions. And there are the neo-Stalinists, who have little enthusiasm for the icons and for the "old women in old villages." Stolypin ("the hangman") is anathema to them. They would not be caught dead in a cathedral.

Despite these internecine differences, the new "Russian party" is united by three main planks: its populism; its belief that of all the Soviet republics, the Russian has been the victim of the most discrimination; and by its campaign against what it calls "Russophobia."

The Russian nationalists have gradually accepted that, though the Revolution of 1917 was a disaster, it cannot be undone. Since they never advocated capitalism, but rather something akin to a conservative *Ständestaat*, they find it relatively easy to embrace a populist platform, which is opposed to *perestroika*, the market, and private initiative. Their spokesmen, such as Mikhail Antonov and Anatoli Zalutsky (the latter is a Jew by origin), have charged Tatyana Zaslavskaya, one of the founders of Soviet sociology and an early member of Gorbachev's brain trust, with the destruction of the Russian village, and they consider the Gorbachev version of "*enrichessez-vous*" (that is to say, encouraging the cooperatives) exceedingly dangerous.

This is accompanied by anti-intellectualism. These writers rail against the nefarious role of the intelligentsia, the traditional bugbear of the Russian right for the past 150 years, who, they argue, have detached themselves from the people and forgotten their national roots. The "Russian party" has no sympathy for atonal music, or for Freud, Einstein, or Kafka, or for most of Western culture, mass and elite, of the past 100 years. But the neo-Stalinists have realized that the old Party orthodoxy has had its day. They understand that much of it will have to be jettisoned to attract the masses. This results in a left-wing populism of sorts. This trend, too, is not entirely new; it began in the 1930s under Stalin, but it has gathered speed in recent years.

And there is the matter of discrimination against the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). The neo-Stalinists claim that the standard of living is lower there than almost everywhere else in the Soviet Union except the Central Asian republics, that every other republic has its own television network, academy of sciences, encyclopedia, publishing houses, and so on. The RSFSR does not even have its own KGB. Such a state of affairs obviously must be remedied.

All these complaints have some justification. But Soviet television is, in reality, Russian television; the same is true for the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, and so on. In the state and Party leadership, the Russian element is overrepresented, and the same applies to the army and other key positions in the Party, state, and society. The income level in the RSFSR is lower than in some other

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

republics, but this is owed to a variety of factors such as the poor quality of the soil in northern Russia and its lower productivity compared with, say, the Baltic republics.

To put right such "discrimination," work has now begun on a new Russian Encyclopedia. This raises delicate questions. Some purists have claimed that Jewish writers, such as Isaac Babel, belong to the history of Jewish literature, rather than to the history of Russian literature, and that there should be no room for, say, Chagall, even though he was born in Vitebsk. Should one include Pasternak and Mandelstam, who also do not hail from Vologda or Tambov? The best known and most loved Soviet comic writers were a team named Ilf and Petrov, but Ilf's name at birth was Feinsilberg. Should one include half of their works, and which half? Should the entry "chess" be deleted from the Encyclopedia? Valentin Sorokin, a poet writing in the August issue of *Nash Sovremennik*, favors deletion. He writes: "I do not wish that a Bashkir, Jew, Tartar or Georgian should compose poetry in my native language. I do not want it, I do not trust them. A Bashkir will not give me the music of my tongue but only a Russian."

Such ideas have occurred to people in other countries in previous ages. For the time being, however, Pasternak and Mandelstam (not to mention Vysotsky and Galich) are more widely read and admired in the Soviet Union than Sorokin and even the most famous of his friends. And the neo-Stalinists have a bigger problem. What writers in Russian literature can be trusted? The classic dictionary of the Russian language, on which every Russian writer has depended, was composed by a 19th-century savant named Dal, who was Danish by origin. Pushkin had some African blood in his veins. Lermontov's ancestors came from Scotland. Gogol was a Ukrainian by origin, Herzen was half German, and there are even some suspicions about Dostoyevsky if one goes back far enough in what the Nazis called *Sippenforschung* (looking for your racial antecedents). The believers in the purity of Russian blood are left with Turgenev and Chekhov, whom they do not like because they were "Westerners." There is also Gorky, but he wrote very bad things about the Russian peasantry, much worse than any of the accursed cosmopolitans.

Finally, the main component, the strangest component, of the thinking of the Russian right is its abhorrence of "Russophobia," a concept that in its modern form dates back to the 1960s, and that has gained more and more prominence of late. It means the hatred and the fear of Russia and the Russian people. It is the title of a long essay by Igor Shafarevich, a well-known Russian mathematician, which was published first in samizdat some years ago, later by a Russian nationalist group in Munich, and eventually by the monthlies *Nash Sovremennik* and *Kuban* in the Soviet Union. According to Shafarevich, there has been a deliberate attempt by Western historians, and also by some Russian writers, to denigrate Russian history as backward, cruel, despotic, hostile to civilizations, a nation of serfs and a danger to all mankind.

Though such sentiments were voiced in hours of anguish by Pushkin and Lermontov, by Cha'adaev and Herzen and Chernyshevsky, these classics of Russian literature are not the villains Shafarevich has in mind. His ire is directed against the late Vasili Grossman, against Richard Pipes, against dissidents and émigrés not remotely as well known to the average Russian as Pushkin and Lermontov but far more convenient as a target. The Russophobes are said to hate Russia with a deep, burning, physiological hatred, because of her forests, fields, and climate, because of her customs, because of her history and culture. These haters include virtually the whole revolutionary movement beginning in the 19th century. Above all, they include the Jews, who are singled out because of their belief in their own mission, notably Heinrich Heine, the Hebrew poet Chaim Nahman Bialik, and George Marshall, former chief of staff and secretary of state. (The name Marshall, Shafarevich explains, is Hebrew, and means being a clown in the ghetto.) Shafarevich says that he will not die in peace unless he succeeds in bringing this message to his people.

For Shafarevich's comments on more recent events, one has to turn to his long essay in the centrist-liberal journal *Novy Mir* in July 1989. Its theme is that Russia should not imitate the Western way of life, because the West is in the throes of a deep spiritual crisis, which will lead to a socio-ecological catastrophe. He has some very harsh things to say about the Western belief in progress, and in particular about the United States, which exploits the rest of the world to keep up its artificially high living standard. (Shafarevich is not a believer in Lenin's theory of imperialism.)

His anti-socialist convictions are second to none; his anti-Americanism and anti-liberalism are of the right, not the left. He concedes that Western liberalism has done much for the spread of humanism. But his humanism was always inwardly directed, for domestic, not foreign, consumption. He refers at length to the refusal of the Western liberal-progressive intelligentsia (Shaw, Wells, Feuchtwanger, Rolland, Einstein, Upton Sinclair) to speak out against the horrors of Stalinist Russia. He reports Solzhenitsyn telling him of his discovery, much to his surprise, that there exists a whole literature in the West about the Soviet concentration camps, but that nobody paid attention until his Gulag trilogy appeared; and in a similar way, Shafarevich continues, even Stalin's campaign against the doctors was virtually hushed up in the West. Only when things began to improve in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death did Western liberals begin to be heard: more proof that their real inspiration was not anti-Stalinist, but anti-Russian.

Strange arguments, stranger conclusion. In a recent interview in *Knizhnoe Obozrenie* (Book Survey), Shafarevich recommended the publication of a Russian émigré author named Ivan Solonevich. The choice is interesting, for Solonevich advocated a "social monar-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chy" for Russia. Shafarevich forgot to mention that his apostle of social monarchy did not have Sweden, Norway, or Denmark in mind; he was, during the 1930s, one of the most fervent collaborators with Nazi Germany.

Is Shafarevich following in the footsteps of Philipp Lenard and Johannes Stark, the great German scientists, leaders in their fields, winners of the Nobel Prize, who believed that Adolf Hitler was the greatest German who had ever lived? I have read his earlier non-mathematical writings and saw him interviewed on Moscow television a little while ago. He is in his 60s, fast talking, short of breath, not a demagogue, quite sincere, a man of character, not a forceful speaker, an eccentric perhaps, but not a fascist. Maybe he is right to warn against borrowing billions from the West. Perhaps copying Western institutions would merely result, as Shafarevich puts it, in becoming another Latin American country. But what is the religious-patriotic alternative to which he indirectly refers? Iran?

There is a strong element of paranoia in the new Russian ideology. The search for the origins of this ideology takes one back to Dostoyevsky's *Diary of a Writer*, to a chauvinism that claims to be humanistic, that is partly religious in inspiration. But there is also an admixture of the Stalinist mentality. With all the hostility of the nationalists toward Stalin, these people are products of the Stalin era in Soviet history. It was one of the basic tenets of that age that giant conspiracies were afoot, at home and abroad, to bring down the Communist regime: that wreckers and spies were lurking behind every corner. A belief in the "hidden hand" may be found in many political cultures, of course, not least our own; but it has been particularly strong in Russia, where it was, for long periods, official state policy. The advocates of the Russophobia concept have never quite rid themselves of the legacy of the days when they marched in the ranks of the Komsomol, the Soviet youth organization, of its enthusiastic self-righteousness, its fanaticism, its absence of skepticism and self-criticism.

Another one of the central features of life under Stalinism was intellectual isolation. This generation has missed almost a century of world intellectual history. Now it discovers all kinds of thinkers, left, right, and center, Arnold Toynbee and Jean-Paul Sartre and Hans Freyer, positivists and metaphysicians, conservatives and radicals. They have no clear notion of how all these thinkers do or do not hang together, who was important and who was not. Shafarevich, for example, genuinely believes that the attitude of the *Nation* and the *New Statesman* toward Stalin and Stalinism was the attitude of all (or most) liberals in the Western world. He and his ilk are ignorant of Western reactions to the Moscow trials and the Stalinist terror (other than Feuchtwanger's book *Moscow 1937*). They prefer to believe that Stalinism was a global intellectual phenomenon "from Madrid to Shanghai" (in Kozhinov's words). This theory has a great many advantages. Why blame the Soviet people if everyone else applauded Stalin, too?

How can anyone with a modicum of common sense believe that Russophobia is the most important and most immediate threat to the existence of the Russian people? Of course, there are those who do not like Russia and the Russians; they can be found among the minorities in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Baltic region, among Russia's neighbors in Eastern Europe and the Far East. But Shafarevich's preoccupation is with "spiritual Russophobia." He and his companions have persuaded themselves that it is most rampant among the very people who love the Russian language and Russian literature, who dream about their past in Russia, who cannot end their not-so-happy and rather one-sided love affair with Russian culture. And Russian national consciousness is not such a tender plant that it would wilt at once if exposed to the winds of change. How many Englishmen are losing sleep as the result of the resentment against their country in various parts of the world? How many Americans worry about anti-Americanism?

Igor Shafarevich has been much in demand in recent weeks. He has appeared in the journals of the right as well as the left, he has been interviewed on national television with the deference due to a great thinker. He has been quoted in some journals with approval, in others with dismay. He has signed an open letter charging *Oktiabr* (October) with Russophobia because it published Vasili Grossman, and calling for action on the part of the authorities. Only yesterday, of course, he was himself at the receiving end of such "administrative measures."

Such views are taken seriously in the Soviet Union today. It would be wrong to treat the neo-Stalinists as eccentrics. Firm convictions tend to have influence at a time of intellectual confusion. The Soviet Union now faces something akin to an ideological vacuum. Marxism-Leninism still serves as the state ideology, but there is no real conviction behind it. What belief can succeed it? The doctrines advocated by Shafarevich and his colleagues are certainly a serious contender. Some claim (mistakenly, I believe) that they are the only contender.

The opinions expressed by Shafarevich are not those of a voice calling in the wilderness. There have been dozens of similar essays of late; nor are his views particularly extreme. (Compared with other authors in journals such as *Molodaia Gvardia* and *Nash Sovremennik*, our academician is a paragon of sense and moderation.) How much political importance, then, should be accorded to this new-old trend? It certainly reflects the mood of some sections of the population. If the party of reform in the Soviet Union should suffer a major setback, these ideologists will be in greater demand. Liberals in and out of Moscow fear that it is only a question of time until Russia is engulfed by reactionary and obscurantist forces. It is true that the Soviet Union is passing through a serious crisis, spiritual as much as political and economic. But luckily there is no Gresham's law of history. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

The Past, Future, and Present

One of life's small pleasures is in not reading the lists of Ten Best Films that appear at the end of every year. First off-putting factor: the Ten. Why Ten? The arbitrary number looks even sillier when the list-maker also names runners-up—as if the law allowed only Ten, and no tampering—instead of making the list Fourteen or Thirty-one if enthusiasm prompts. Second, there's the word "Best," which implies that these ten films fought their way to the top through a horde of excellent competitors. Not always the case, to put it gently. Wouldn't "Favorite" be a bit more palatable? (I confess that a few times I've made lists myself—at the invitation of others—to cast votes for my favorites in the midst of other lists that were to appear with mine.)

This past year my small pleasure was increased because I could also skip the Ten Best lists of the previous decade. The number Ten twice in one phrase! But ten years do provide some perspective from which to see historical change, whatever one's choice of films in that time. The retrospect from 1990 confirms what was becoming clear in 1980: the age of the masters is over.

From the late 1950s until the middle 1970s we lived in anticipation of more works from masters—Antonioni, Bergman, Fellini, Bresson, Kurosawa, Buñuel chief among them. That anticipation was the frame of our film-going. No such colossi bestrode the last decade. Many beautiful films have come along, but no figure has emerged as a colossus. The new directors who promised most have halted or waned: von Trotta, Syberberg, Herzog, Wenders, Cavalier, Varda, to name some.

That point seems to me much more relevant to the state of film than the rise of the VCR. (Anyway, *Variety* reported recently that there were more tickets sold in 1989 than in 1988, and new theaters keep opening; so—in the United States, at least—the VCR may be more of a stimulus than a threat.) Maybe the quest for genius, the basic drive in all the arts for several centuries, has outlived its pertinence. Maybe the huge increases in population and education—and therefore in emulation—mean that we will have fewer geniuses and more artists who are good for a while. The surrounding landscape is becoming less flat, thus making colossal eminence less easy and less likely. Lionel Trilling wrote of "the peculiar bitterness of modern man, the knowledge that he is not a genius." Maybe that bitterness is becoming more bearable, with the dimming of expectation.

One of those who started to fade before 1980 is the French-Swiss director Alain Tanner. In the 1970s he made several films of extraordinary quality, especially *La Salamandre*, which—memorable in several ways—stands out as one of the most trenchant films on woman's changing view of her place and rights. Through the late 1970s and the years following, his work has become more and more feeble and, as usually happens, is more and more laden with critical exegesis about its radicalism.

Now, with **A Flame in My Heart** (Roxie Releasing), he descends further. Set in Paris and Cairo, this is about an actress pursued by an obsessive lover who attracts her but whom nevertheless she wants to discard. In the attempt to lose him, she picks up a man in the Métro and begins an affair with him. The biter is then bit. She becomes something of an obsessive lover herself.

This is a possibly fruitful idea, but the screenplay—by the woman who plays the actress, Myriam Mézières—is so ragged, so spasmodic in action, so inconclusive that the film diminishes to little more than a setting for the naked scenes of sex. Under the banner of freedom, Mézières has written herself a role that is only an exercise in self-love and self-display, a flaunting of liberation that is just a franker version of actor's vanity.

Tanner shot the film in 16mm black and white, for budget reasons I suppose, then blew it up to 35mm. This makes it look even more like home porn. Nothing in the way Tanner handles his camera or his actors reflects the subtle and discerning director he once was.

It's almost 20 years since it was possible to expect more of Costa-Gavras than the reduced, exploitative use of his earlier political concerns. Such stirring, provocative films as *Z* and *The Confession* are now almost obscured behind the pseudo-political anger of subsequent

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Born on the Fourth of July. *Ron Kovic, the paraplegic Vietnam veteran who became an anti-war activist, is played by Tom Cruise with surprising fire. Though the film never quite coalesces, Oliver Stone, the director, has charged it with heat and anger. (Reviewed 1/29/90)* **Enemies, A Love Story.** *Flavorful, funny, and moving, this tale of a man and three women, survivors of Nazi horrors, who get amorously entangled in New York, has lovely texture. The cast is superb. (1/1/90)* **Glory.** *The formation of a black Civil War regiment and its fate. Historically highly accurate, cinematically splendid. Except for Matthew Broderick as the white commander, everything grips. Edward Zwick directed with spirit and vision. (1/8&15/90)* **Roger & Me.** *Michael Moore, of Flint, Michigan, tried to see Roger Smith, president of GM, to ask him to pay attention to residents of Flint unemployed through GM plant closings. Moore couldn't get to Smith; so instead he made this wry, cutting documentary. (1/22/90)* **—SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

films like *Missing*, *Hannah K.*, and *Betrayed*. So it was pleasant to see **Music Box** (Tri-Star) begin as if it were really driving someplace with implacable intent.

But the screenplay, written by Joe Eszterhas and tolerated by Costa-Gavras, gets muddled as it goes and gets worse as it ends. The subject is the disclosure of a seemingly respectable man's horrifying political past. A Hungarian immigrant, long resident in Chicago, father of grown American-born children, is investigated by the U.S. Government and is indicted as a former fascist killer in Budapest. That is the thriller-suspense aspect. The theme below it is much more interesting: Can human beings prevail upon their own minds to convince themselves that the past did not exist and only the present is true—prevail so completely that the past seems fantastication when it is exhumed? This is the crux of the whole enterprise, and this is exactly what the film omits. The fantasist is never seen facing the facts of his past: the film simply ends.

Partly this is because, though the father is a major role, the principal role is his daughter, who is the lawyer defending him; and the film ends, as they say, on her—her discovery that, despite all denials, her father is guilty. To show the real ending would make it *his* picture. (Sorry to tip the end, but not *very* sorry. The structural flaw is so blatant that it dwindles what might have been a film worth seeing.)

Two losses are involved. The father is played sturdily by Armin Mueller-Stahl, the German actor who was first seen here in Fassbinder's *Lola*. Mueller-Stahl has a gruff, rough peasant strength encased in suave control. And Jessica Lange plays his daughter, the lawyer, perfectly. After *Frances* and *Country* and *Far North*, Lange has become an actress worth hoping about.

Too bad that a rudderless vessel is carrying these two performances out of reach.

A newcomer. Miguel Pereira is an Argentinean who lives in London. His first feature, **Veronico Cruz** (Cinevista), was coproduced by Argentine and British groups. Set in Argentina, Pereira's screenplay is based on the experiences of a schoolteacher in rural Argentina; and it tells yet again the always-touching story of how a teacher can open a child's eyes. In this case, the teacher is transferred after a few years to another post, and when he returns for a visit, he learns that the boy, now a teenager, has been sent to the Falkland Islands war with the British. (Thus the co-producers themselves are a kind of subtext to the film.)

Veronico Cruz, like last year's *Yaaba* set

Magnificent . . . powerful . . . an enormous contribution to our understanding of the political role of nuclear weapons."

—*Washington Post Book World*

A wise and humane treatment of the most important choices in our nuclear history."

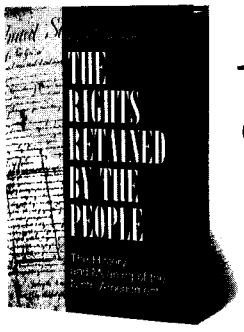
—*The New York Times*

McGeorge Bundy

DANGER AND SURVIVAL

Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years

Now in paperback from VINTAGE BOOKS
A Random House Company



Robert Bork compared it to an inkblot.

Warren Burger couldn't recall what it said. Yet the Ninth Amendment's simple guarantee of rights—"The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people"—may be the key to the meaning of the entire Constitution, as envisioned by the Framers. 416 pp/$22.95

"The Ninth Amendment is 'forgotten' no more. . . . This is certainly the book I will turn to first in my own work."

—*Sanford Levinson, University of Texas*

"A treasure for historians, legal scholars, philosophers, and concerned citizens."

—*Alex Kozinski, U.S. Court of Appeals*

Cato Institute, Dept. NR, 224 Second St., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

CATO INSTITUTE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in Burkina Faso, has some function as travelogue. The camera shows us a lot that is lovely and grim in a remote place. Again like *Yaaba*, the film also reveals that the lives there are more complex than we might have assumed.

Some condensation would have helped, and a few dream moments could have been dropped. But the actor who plays the teacher, Juan José Camero, is engagingly modest, and the locals who play most of the parts are endearing. *Veronico Cruz* is hardly unforgettable; neither is it quickly forgettable. With quiet and ease, it at least feeds our hunger for reassurance about universalities in people. •

The American medical way of death.

Do Not Go Gentle

By Arthur Kleinman

It is only in the Western world in the second half of this century that death has become distant enough for us to speak of those who are "near death" as a special group. For most of human history, and still in many poor societies, people live near death, too near. In 18th-century France, for example, if you lived to 50, you survived your spouse, half of your children, and half of your extended family. By 70, you were a sole survivor in your local age group. In rural areas of the poorest Third World societies, 200 out of every 1,000 babies born alive succumb in the first year. The life expectancy for adults is almost half what it is in the United States, where since 1900 it has increased by 25 years.

The average member of our society now dies in the middle of the eighth decade—a few years earlier for men, a few years later on for women. Fewer than ten white babies die of every 1,000 born alive (the rate for black babies is not nearly as impressive). Death rates for children younger than five and for adolescents and young adults are quite low (again, save for blacks). Death rates among the middle aged are still declining. Those who live into their ninth decade are now the most rapidly growing age group in the country.

Still, that does not mean that we can escape death. It means only that we are technologically powerful enough to prolong the end. Thanks to biomedicine, that leviathan of hospitals, medical schools, research laboratories, free-standing clinics, and health professionals, we can prolong the end for younger members of our society, too—those who are succumbing to advanced metastatic cancers, to heart and lung failure, to catastrophic accidents that have destroyed virtually all vital functions. And with the assistance of tube feedings and mechanical ventilators, with potent antibiotics and skilled nursing, we can keep alive for years—often, for too many years—patients who are in an irreversible coma.

The cost of all this effort to prolong life-near-death is immense. It can be measured in the pain and the fear of the frail elderly, in the suffering of families—and in the hospitals' billings. Health care consumes 12 percent of our nation's GNP—the most spent by any nation—and much of that cost occurs in the final hours of life, in greatly expensive intensive care units to which the near dead shuttle back and forth from hospital rooms or nursing homes.

"Near Death"
by Frederick Wiseman
(PBS, January 21, 2 p.m.-8 p.m.)

No matter the terrible limitations on life—say, the dependence on mechanical ventilation through an intubation tube in the lungs—or the question of who pays. Whether or not our limited resources would be better spent on more viable populations, our health care system, sometimes under direction from the courts, accepts life at any cost. In America at the turn of the millennium, there is no social obligation to die. Doctors are no longer trained to help patients die a good death. The dying and their families are not socialized to expect a good death. Death is no longer regarded as a natural event, as something that at the worst of times is even to be desired.

We expect death to take place in an institution; and yet we know that a hospital or a nursing home is not a good place to experience the end. Our hospitals and nursing homes have become museums of the final hours—but now desperation and agony are stretched out over much longer periods. Visit your local house of death. In the MICU, or medical intensive care unit, there are rooms in which one or two cadaverous bodies lie in electronic beds surrounded by marvelous machines that sustain the lungs and the heart, the kidney and the endocrine glands, or replace their functions altogether. The various tubes that enter and leave the dying bodies facilitate a constant monitoring of vital processes, and esoteric ones as well. Alarms go off when the quantitative signs of our qualitative human quiddity indicate dangerous change, or a movement toward death.

The response is quick: crash carts and interns arrive. The heart's terminally weak fibrillations can be stopped. With "short sharp shock" a not quite normal rhythm, but one sufficient to sustain the flow of blood to vital organs, begins anew. The patient, often delirious, is unaware of what has happened, or lapses into a stupor or a coma. Later the nurses and doctor will ask the dying patient (if he or she is competent to answer) or the family if resuscitation should be carried out when the next "terminating physiological episode" occurs. In the biomedical ethos, it is a question that a confused patient and a distressed family cannot easily answer. Even doctors and nurses often find themselves divided about how and when to discuss the options. Death is not an easy word to mention when equipment can revive even the moribund. Euphemisms come into play, and they confuse more than they clarify.

In the nursing home, we see the long grim line of demented elderly, an appalling continuum of profound cognitive losses—from no orientation to no memory, to no language, to no understanding, and on, penultimately, to no consciousness. These are deeply disturbing images, and they are not ones our society parades before us. They lack optimism, and they are not commercially useful. They challenge the secular orientation of this society and expose the superficiality of its popular culture. These images of the dying broach inconvenient questions. What is life for? How do we decide when it is time to die? What constitutes death? (Flat brain waves in the United States, but not in Japan: death is also a

Arthur Kleinman, professor of anthropology and psychiatry at Harvard University, is the author of *The Illness Narratives* (Basic Books).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social state.) Who decides? We resort to discourse—to the distant, technical terms of psychology or policy analysis or medical ethics—to cushion or to deny these images and their moral implications, which anyway we will all get our chance to face.

Frederick Wiseman's difficult and rewarding "Near Death," a six-hour black-and-white documentary, takes us right into the very center of the dilemma. The film takes place at one of America's great hospitals, Boston's Beth Israel, an affiliated teaching hospital of the Harvard Medical School. This hospital's MICU is as technologically sophisticated as any in the country, and its dying patients are fully representative of those in big city hospitals. There are two things, however, that make this hospital somewhat distinctive: its nurses, who are empowered by the hospital's physicians to assert their professional role as equals in the care of very sick patients, and its physicians, who have a reputation for bringing patients and families into the decision-making process. Beth Israel's ethos, even in the high-tech MICU, encourages attention to the patient's and the family's perspectives—attention lacking in all too many tertiary care facilities. Because its setting is such a humane institution, Wiseman's documentary is at once moving and troubling.

Wiseman and his superb cameraman, John Davey, follow four patients near death in the BI's MICU. Each is kept alive with life-support technology, whose continued use is decided by the medical team, the family, and the patients themselves. Mrs. Factor, who has had a stroke, is intubated and ventilated by a breathing machine; this has happened to her several times over the past few months. Should she have a tracheostomy, so that she can be ventilated more effectively? Should the tube be removed for a final trial of unassisted respiration? If her lungs fail that trial, should she be reintubated, that is, should she live only by means of artificial respiration? Mrs. Factor's anguished husband, a retired physician, is a problem for the nurses. Her private physician and the MICU's medical team have divergent views of what should be done, which seems to create unnecessary confusion and uncertainty in her care.

Mr. Cabra is in his 30s, a father of three. He has respiratory failure, owing to the side effect of an anti-cancer agent that has damaged his lungs. He cannot communicate. His heart is barely working. If it stops, should the medical team attempt to restart it? His wife and family members discuss this dilemma with the doctors. Mr. Gavin, an elderly man with severe heart disease, is kept alive by heart medications powerful enough to force his failing heart to beat and pump his blood. But these medicines cannot be used indefinitely. He and his wife talk with an extraordinarily sensitive doctor about whether to stop the treatment and accept a likely death. Finally, Mr. Sperazza's heart and lungs are failing, and Mrs. Factor's question is raised again. Mrs. Sperazza, like Mrs. Cabra, faces the likelihood that if her husband is taken off of vital supports, he will die.

In six emotionally taxing hours, we observe the treatment given to each of these patients. We listen in on discussions among the medical team, and between patient, doctor, nurse, and family. There is no narrator. Over time, the medical staff raises philosophical and economic questions, along with therapeutic ones. We hear the frustrations of each of the protagonists as they search for a humane way of living at the edge of death. And in the case of some of these patients, we enter into the end, despite their choice, despite the ministrations of biomedical technique.

Several of the scenes stick in the mind well after the film comes to its own overly prolonged end. In one, the medical team members are trying to decide on a particular technological intervention even though they don't believe it can be effective. Why are they doing what they are doing? They seem to be following out the technical logic of an established protocol. "Are we managing her chance to live or her death?" "If we are managing her death, I'm not sure we need it." We owe terminal patients care, the film insists. But do we owe them an improbable, expensive, and painful attempt at a cure? Dr. Taylor, Mr. Gavin's personal physician, who has already gone over these questions on other days with his patient and his wife, broaches the issue of stopping treatment:

> "What's your sense of what's going on?"
> "I'd like to hear from you."
> "Do you have a sense of it?"
> "From what the doctors tell me, I'm on the borderline. Now and then I'm on the borderline between life and death."

Using the patient's very term, "the borderline," Dr. Taylor seems to be patiently searching for Mr. Gavin's answer. Yet all along we know that there is only one answer. Dr. Taylor knows it. Mr. and Mrs. Gavin know it, but they are understandably reluctant to say it. In the guise of real choice, in other words, they are being guided toward the only choice. The point is, Dr. Taylor's care means helping Mr. Gavin to die. For the philosophers, it is an abstract bioethical dilemma; but the practitioner, the patient, and the family are immersed in the practical experience of suffering, and of transcending suffering. The answer that they seek cannot come from the rationality or the technology of biomedical science.

The strengths of Wiseman's film are owed to the density of these master images. In the absence of an official commentary, we are caught up in the same uncertainty as the protagonists; the effect is a remarkable intensity of witnessing. We begin to wonder if a culture that insists on personal autonomy and individual choice even at the final moment might be making dying more, not less, difficult. Is this how we wish to confront death? Have we empowered or disempowered health professionals? Have we made them healers as well as technicians, by insisting that therapeutic relationships be egalitarian or pseudo-egalitarian, that treatment decisions be negotiated? Is the MICU where we should place most of our health care system's resources?

The problem with this unusual documentary, indeed, is that there are too many scenes, too many questions. For a director, this is a rather self-indulgent film. And there are other problems. The narrow focus on the MICU leaves out the political and legal contexts. Observing families in the MICU, even for a quarter of a day, is not the same as being with them at home, coming to know them, and understanding the impact on their lives of their family member's illness and its treatment. In this sense, the film replicates the weaknesses of the institutional setting that it documents. The MICU is a way station in the course of human lives; to appreciate these lives, deaths, we need to move outside the artificial constraints of the hospital. And to appreciate the misallocation of resources, we also need to see those whose illnesses do not receive care in the MICU.

And yet, for whatever part of Wiseman's impressive work that we have the time or the fortitude to watch, "Near Death" forces us to think about how we die, how we want to die, how we want doctors and nurses to respond to our final hours. Neither the power of therapeutic technologies nor the quest for institutional efficiency overwhelms the intimate human meanings of "our" death. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The champion of the new Russian right.

The Closing of the Russian Mind

BY LIAH GREENFELD

Since the early 19th century, Russian thought has tended to one of two forms: it has been Westernist or Slavophile. Both Westernism and Slavophilism are expressions of Russian patriotism, both are reactions to Russia's sense of inferiority toward the West. Westernists proposed to follow the West, in order to achieve equality with it, and eventually to overcome it. Slavophiles recommended forgetting about the West: it was a degenerate society, its virtues masked great vices, and Russia's apparent inferiority, its lack of political and economic institutions, was in fact an advantage.

These two currents have followed a cyclical pattern since they first emerged in the 1830s and 1840s. In moments of optimism, when restructuring society according to the Western model seemed possible, a Westernist perspective dominated. Russia would boldly announce its decision to change, and Slavophilism would retreat into the background. But the failure to change (for whatever reason) discredited Westernism, and Slavophilism surged to the fore.

In fact, Slavophilism and Westernism have often not been clearly distinguishable. The same people could be Westernists in one period of their lives and Slavophiles in another. The Westernizer Herzen (who ended as a Slavophile) wrote, upon the deaths of the Slavophiles Aleksei Khomiakov and Konstantin Aksakov:

> Yes, we were their opponents, but very strange opponents: we had *one love*, but not *an identical one*. Both they and we conceived from early years one powerful, unaccountable, physiological, passionate feeling, which they took to be a recollection, and we a prophesy, the feeling of boundless, all-encompassing love for the Russian people, Russian life, the Russian turn of mind. Like Janus, or like a two-headed eagle, we were looking in different directions while a single heart was beating in us.

Westernism asserted itself in the Revolution of 1917. Slavophilism, which never died, was kept under wraps by the state committed to Marxism and intolerant of ideological confusion. At certain periods Slavophile sentiments were allowed more leeway than at others, and occasionally (during and after World II) they were even encouraged. It is important to remember that at all times Westernism in Soviet Russia was quite Slavophile anyway. Only certain expressions of Slavophilism (such as religion) were suppressed; other expressions (such as the veneration of folklore) were often cultivated. Meanwhile, the aggressively Westernist agenda of the Revolution—to establish world communism, with Russia as the leader of the Western nations—was allowed to die slowly. Who cared in the period of "stagnation" whether Russia was "a European state"?

Russophobia
by Igor Shafarevich
(published by
the Union of the Russian People)

This changed with Mikhail Gorbachev. He has declared himself a Westernist. In his book, *Perestroika*, which appeared in 1987, he insisted that the "U.S.S.R. is a European State." He also announced his resolution to catch up with the West, to achieve, as the Russians say, "world standards." As part of his Westernizing effort, he instituted *glasnost*, which has meant, among other things, the resurrection of Slavophilism—at precisely the moment that Gorbachev set out to reinvigorate Westernism.

As Gorbachev encounters difficulties, his Westernism, any Westernism, becomes unpopular. (See "From Russia with Hate" by Walter Laqueur, page 21.) One of the most striking phenomena in the Soviet Union today is the vigor of nationalist sentiment everywhere in the vast empire. In Russia itself, it takes on an unmistakably Slavophile, xenophobic, and menacing form. In the last year, works that exemplify this new but not-so-new Slavophile thought have begun to appear in the official press. And the more frequently they appear, the more unrestrained their language becomes.

One of the most articulate examples of this literature is *Russophobia* by Igor Shafarevich. Shafarevich is a famous mathematician, a corresponding member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, a dissident writer himself, and—what is most disturbing—a founding member of the Committee on the Defense of Human Rights in the U.S.S.R. His book was written roughly a decade ago, and first appeared in samizdat in the last two years. Its significance was immediately recognized by readers of different persuasions, and in late 1988 and early 1989 it was published in installments in three émigré journals. It was offered as a welcome sign of national revival by *Veche*, the organ of the Union of the Russian People (based in West Germany and dubbed "the new black hundreds" by another Russian Orthodox publication in the West), and as a warning by two liberal publications with largely Jewish audiences, *22* and *Vremia i My*.

At the same time, the Union of the Russian People published Shafarevich's opus as a book. Several months after the book's appearance in the West, a slightly shortened version of *Russophobia* was published in the pages of *Nash Sovremennik* (No. 6, 1989), which is the official organ of the Writers Union of the Russian Republic. Championing the piece, its editors wrote that the years that have elapsed since the completion of the essay in the early 1980s have not in any way diminished its relevance.

The goal of *Russophobia*, declares Shafarevich, is to explain the reasons for the emergence in contemporary Russia of a certain pervasive intellectual current: the hatred of Russia. Its emergence is marked, he thinks, by the appearance in samizdat of essays by two dissidents, G. Pomeranz and Andrei Amal'rik, at the end of the 1960s. Thanks to emigration during the following decade, Russophobia's center of gravity shifted to the West, where the views of its representatives are now expressed in the émigré press and inform "the majority of the works of contemporary Western specialists in Russian history." (Of the latter Shafarevich cites only one example, *Russia under the Old Regime* by Richard Pipes.) The writings of Russophobes are pernicious, he says. They express "the ideology of an active, significant current. This current already dominates public opinion in the West. . . . At a certain moment it can exert a decisive influence on the history of our country."

Shafarevich starts by refuting the claims of Russophobes with the help of "concrete arguments." To the allegation that Russian history has been characterized by "slavish psychology," he retorts that "Pushkin, for example," thought

LIAH GREENFELD is a John L. Loeb Associate Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

differently. He counters the observation that Russians are not sympathetic to other peoples and tend to blame "Tatars, Greeks, Jews" rather than themselves for the state of their society with the observation that hostility to foreigners is not peculiar to Russians. What is peculiar to them, rather, is spiritual independence, which compares well with some Western, allegedly liberty-loving nations. The claim that Russians love strong government is answered with historical evidence to the effect that the concept of a totalitarian state, far from being born in Russia, was created in the West (by Hobbes). Finally, Shafarevich refutes the view that the Revolution of 1917 represented a natural continuation of earlier Russian development, and was an expression of indigenous traditions such as "Russian Messianism," by pointing out that messianism was invented by Jews, while socialism was imported into Russia from the West by émigrés in the 19th century. "It was a payment, so to speak, for the entrance of Russia into the sphere of new Western culture."

Shafarevich then broadens his attack, questioning the veracity of the Russophobes. They point to the cruelties of Russian history. Why don't they consider the behavior of King David, of Cromwell in Ireland, of "god-fearing puritans" slaughtering Indians in North America, not to speak of American slavery, the French Revolution, and the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre? No, the suspicion of Russia conceals an ulterior motive. "We are here dealing . . . with journalistic propaganda. . . . All propaganda has a certain PURPOSE. . . . What is the purpose of all this literature, why does someone wish to perpetuate the view that *Russians are a people of slaves, admiring cruelty and groveling before strong government, hating everything foreign and hostile to culture, that Russia is an eternal seedbed of despotism and totalitarianism, dangerous for the rest of the world?*"

To answer this question, Shafarevich suggests, one has to look to the Russophobes' views of contemporary Russian reality and its future. Russophobes are entirely unsympathetic to Russian nationalism and stress the necessity of emulating the Western democracies. Shafarevich castigates Russophobes for simplifying social reality and reducing Russia's choices to "European democracy" or authoritarianism. He rejects the former. According to Shafarevich, democracy is

> not natural. Transition to it was accompanied by a torturous and bloody cataclysm; evidently, some violence during the natural historical process is necessary. Such was the civil war in England. In France, civil war and terror were only the beginning. . . . Our attempt to institute this regime in February 1917 was unsuccessful. In Germany such attempts, realized in the Weimar Republic, led, as a reaction to it, to National Socialism. . . . Plato has written that democracies degenerate into tyrannies. He, like Aristotle, believed that unlimited popular sovereignty cannot be considered a form of political regime at all. Edmund Burke, assessing the early stages of the French Revolution, wrote that unlimited democracy is as despotic as unlimited monarchy. Yet contemporary Western democracies are wholly guided by the principle of unlimited popular sovereignty: every decision accepted by the majority of the population is [considered] legal.

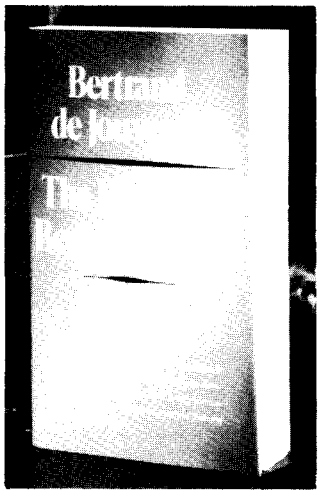
No, says Shafarevich, even Russophobes cannot be so naive (so "mentally retarded") as to seriously desire the establishment of such a system. They must have another motive. This real motive is "the irritation bred by the thought that Russia can SEEK some ways of ITS OWN in history." Shafarevich accuses the Russophobes of a

> desire to deny the possibility that the people will settle on a way of its own choosing (chosen not by secret vote, of course, but through its historical experience). They dream of transforming Russia into a mechanism, a robot deprived of all elements of life . . . and controlled by a program fabricated god knows where and fed to it. Democracy is this "program," the "controlling mechanism," which has no organic connection with this country.

NEW FROM **LIBERTY FUND**

THE ETHICS OF REDISTRIBUTION

by Bertrand de Jouvenel
Introduction by John Gray



The distinguished French political philosopher Bertrand de Jouvenel shows, through many varied and insightful arguments, that redistribution is ethically indefensible for, and practically unworkable in, a complex society.

"Only Hayek has rivaled Bertrand de Jouvenel in demonstrating why redistributionism in the democracies inexorably results in the atrophy of personal responsibility and the hypertrophy of bureaucracy and the centralized state instead of in relief to the hapless minorities it is pledged to serve." —*Robert Nisbet*

98 + xviii pages. Foreword and preface to the 1st Edition, introduction, appendix, index.

Hardcover $12.00 0-86597-084-x
Paperback $ 5.00 0-86597-085-8
Liberty*Press*, 1989

ALSO AVAILABLE

WHAT SHOULD ECONOMISTS DO?

By James M. Buchanan
Preface by H. Geoffrey Brennan and Robert D. Tollison

Sixteen essays on the relevance of economics from the 1986 Nobel Prize winner in economics.

292 pages. Liberty*Press*, 1979

Hardcover $8.00
Paperback $3.50

Please send me:

Quantity Ordered	Title	Edition	Price	Amount
	The Ethics of Redistribution	Hardcover	$12.00	
		Paperback	$ 5.00	
	What Should Economists Do?	Hardcover	$ 8.00	
		Paperback	$ 3.50	
			Subtotal	
			Indiana residents add 5% sales tax	
			Total	

We pay book rate postage. Please allow approximately 4 weeks for delivery. All orders must be prepaid in U.S. dollars.

☐ Enclosed is my check or money order made payable to Liberty Fund, Inc.
☐ Please send me a copy of your current catalogue.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____

Mail to: Liberty Fund, Inc.
7440 North Shadeland Avenue, Dept. BB108
Indianapolis, IN 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Apparently moved by his recent popularity, and by the general atmosphere of *glasnost*, to take the occupation of publicist seriously, Shafarevich articulated this idea in another essay that appeared in July in *Novy Mir*, the loudspeaker of *perestroika*. There, in a work titled "Two Roads to the Same Abyss," he likened Western democracy to the Stalinist period in Russian history, to which, in his opinion, it is at least equal in cruelty. (In the West, the cruelty is covert, and directed against foreign rather than native populations.) Instead of imitating this irredeemable regime, he proposes to return to the blessed world of agrarian society and the Russian commune. Reading this essay, one gets an eerie feeling of traveling 150 years backward in time. Shafarevich's Slavophilism is so authentic it could be mistaken for the original.

The ideas of the Russophobes, according to Shafarevich, reflect a philosophy. Should we consider society as an organism or a mechanism, as a living thing or as dead matter? The choice between these two alternatives, he says, "forms people of two different psychological types. Adopting the latter [as Russophobes obviously do], a person becomes a demiurge, a little god, and ultimately a rapist [*nasil'nik*]. It is thus that a society emerges, lacking all freedom, whatever democratic attributes this ideology might display."

It was Augustin Cochin, in his studies of the French Revolution in the early 20th century, who first discerned a specific social or spiritual stratum that he called the "Little People," which lived in its own world, separate and unconnected to the experience of the People as such. "One could say," writes Shafarevich about Cochin's idea, that this was "an 'anti-people' among the People." This "wonderful theory" explains how regimes are perverted, seduced away from the desires of the majority of the people. Apparently, in every period of crisis in the life of peoples, "Little Peoples" among them emerge, whose aspirations and values go against the aspirations and values of the People.

He turns, of course, to the "Little People" in Russia. They include members of the radical intelligentsia from the 1860s on and the Russophobes of today, among whom Shafarevich singles out Alexander Yanov, Pomeranz, and Amal'rik. All the characteristics of the "Little People," that alien body, that cancer in the organism of the nation, are manifest in their case. Shafarevich quotes from Pomeranz: "The place of intelligentsia is always in between destinations. . . . Spiritually all contemporary intellectuals belong to a diaspora. We are nowhere complete aliens. We are nowhere complete natives." This, Shafarevich comments, "perfectly expresses the disposition of 'rootless individuals,' who compose the 'Little People.' "

The "Little People" of today are remarkably similar to those who existed in Russia at the time of the Revolution. Like Stalin and Zinoviev, contemporary Russophobes are most of all concerned about the problem of Russian "chauvinism." They compare current emigration with the emigration of "hope" before 1917, creating the myth that the dissidents who left were forced to leave, when in fact they begged for exit visas. Equally revealing of their true nature is

> that amazing quality, that [they] all too frequently concern themselves with the problems of MINORITIES. Thus they are incensed about the question of freedom of emigration, which is pertinent perhaps only to hundreds of thousands of people. . . . In the area of nationalities, the fate of Crimean Tatars enjoys more attention than the fate of Ukrainians, and the fate of Ukrainians more than that of Russians. . . .

Who are these "Little People" in the heart of the Russian nation? They call themselves "dissidents" and "intelligentsia," but Shafarevich brushes these terms aside. How, he asks, can we regard as "dissidents," for example, such people as Yanov or Shragin, who, while they lived in Russia, were typical "workers of the ideological sector," or "especially R. Pipes"? How on earth, one wonders, is it possible to consider this Harvard historian one of the Russian "Little People"? The answer to this seemingly perplexing question is soon clear. A bond of blood links Pipes to other Russophobes: Pipes, though an American, is a Jew.

We have arrived at the juicy part of Shafarevich's treatise. "The hatred against one nation is most certainly connected to the acute sense of one's belonging to another one." Thus he is moved to ask:

> WHOSE national sentiments, then, are reflected [in Russophobia and the desire to make Russia a democracy]? For anyone acquainted with the reality of our country, the answer is beyond doubt. There is only one nation of whose concerns we hear almost every day. Jewish national emotions shake both our country and the whole world, influencing disarmament talks, trade policy, and international connections of scientists. . . . The "Jewish Question" has acquired an incomprehensible power over the minds of people, eclipsed the problems of Ukrainians, Estonians, Armenians, and Crimean Tatars, while the existence of a "Russian Question" is not recognized at all.

In a rhetorical turn, Shafarevich proposes that we accept an equation between the "intelligentsia" and the "Little People." The Jews themselves stress that they are a central element in the Russian intelligentsia, he says, and triumphantly completes his syllogism: thus the Jews themselves acknowledge that they are the alien "Little People." He quotes Pomeranz again: "I would like to see even Israel not a purely Jewish State, but a refuge for every 'deportee,' for every person who has lost his motherland, a center of international diaspora." It is interesting to know who these "deportees" are, Shafarevich comments sarcastically; they are certainly "not the Arab refugees from Palestine. . . . The image of Israel as a capital or a Vatican, the haven of an 'international diaspora' of 'rootless' individuals, rather corresponds to the concept of the 'Little People,' which in our epoch finds itself under the dominant influence of Jewish nationalism."

But why are the Jews "imbued with such irritation, not to say hatred, against Russia, Russian history, and Russians in general?" The answer again is evident—so academician Shafarevich tells us—if we take into account "the problem that every work of Russophobe literature touches on, in one way or another: WHAT WAS THE INFLUENCE ON THE FATE OF RUSSIA OF THE UNPRECEDENTED INFLUX OF JEWISH NATIONAL FORCES INTO THE POLITICAL LIFE—DURING EXACTLY THE PERIOD OF THE GREATEST CRISIS IN RUSSIAN HISTORY?" Truly, Shafarevich says, history shows no other case in which members of the Jewish population of a country had such a tremendous influence on its development. America especially, warns Shafarevich (momentarily posing as a friend of the West), should heed the story of Russia's relationship with the Jews, for "in America . . . the 'lobby' of Jewish nationalism has gained such unaccountable influence that fundamental political decisions are affected by the interests of the numerically small Jewish population."

Shafarevich understands that the subject is delicate, but he does not flinch. He intends to resist a "deeply rooted, internalized inhibition," according to which "any thought that somewhere in some period actions of some Jews harmed other peoples, even any objective study which does not from the start rule out such possibility, is considered reactionary, not intellectual enough, impure." The Jews use anti-Semitism as a weapon:

> Anyone knows that anti-Semitism is dirty, uncultured, that it is a shame of the 20th century (and of other periods too). It has been explained by barbarism, by the underdevelopment of capitalist relations—or, conversely, by the stagnation of capitalism—or else by the envy of the less-talented toward a more talented na-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion. . . . But nobody has ever explained what one would think should be the starting point: What is it, anti-Semitism, what does this word refer to? In fact, the question itself is a victim of that inhibition: not to allow, even as a thought, that actions of some Jewish groups, personalities could have detrimental effects on others. . . . [The Jews use] anti-Semitism exactly as a device to stir emotions, consciously ignoring logic.

Shafarevich will not be silenced by this cheap trick: he is going to say what he has to say, anti-Semitism or not.

What did the Jews do to Russia? For a start, they were overrepresented among those who opposed the old Russian czarist order. In the 1870s the situation was not particularly grave; the leadership of the radical group The People's Will included only four Jews, "which [naturally], after the assassination of Alexander II, led to outbursts of popular indignation, directed against the Jews." The situation changed in the 1880s, and after the Revolution the Jews could be found "in every corner and on all levels of power." "One is struck by the especial concentration of Jewish names during the most painful moments, among the organizers and executors of actions that changed life in a particularly abrupt fashion and contributed to the disintegration of historical traditions and the destruction of historical roots." The Jews were "amazingly" numerous among the personnel of the Cheka (simply defined, the organization responsible for shooting persons who failed to demonstrate sufficient sympathy toward the Revolution). The characteristic Jewishness of the Bolshevik executioners is most conspicuous in the execution of Nicholas II:

> This ritual action symbolized the end of centuries of Russian history, so that it can be compared only to the execution of Charles I in England or Louis XVI in France. It would seem that representatives of an insignificant ethnic minority should keep as far as possible from this painful action, which would reverberate in all history. Yet what names do we meet? The execution was personally overseen by Yakov Yurovskii, who shot the Czar; the president of the local Soviet was Beloborodov (Vaisbart); the person responsible for the general administration in Yekaterinburg was Shaya Goloshchekin. To round out the picture, on the wall of the room where the execution took place was a distich from a poem by Heine (written in German) about King Balthazar, who offended Jehovah and was killed for the offense.

But the real significance of the Jewish menace, for Shafarevich, lies elsewhere:

> The most fatal characteristic of this whole period, which may be attributed to the steadily increasing Jewish influence, was that behind purely liberal, Western or international phraseology hid anti-national tendencies. . . . Both liberal and revolutionary activists of Jewish nationality were under the influence of mighty nationalistic sentiments. . . . The thought that political turmoil may serve as an instrument for the achievement of national goals is not foreign to the Jewish consciousness.

Such Party activists (evidently Jews in spirit) as Bukharin or Stalin were known to insist upon what the former called "greater concessions to national movements."

In their hatred of Russia, and in their other liberal and Westernist sentiments, the Jews are moved by their own, Jewish, nationalism. But the question remains: Why do the Jews hate Russia so much? It is to this question that Shafarevich turns in the last part of his work. He believes that this hatred is "related to the faith in 'the Chosen People' and in the world dominance to which it is destined." The "most obvious reason" for it is, however, the "two-thousand-year-long isolation" of the Jews. This isolation, he says, was "not forced, but chosen voluntarily, long before the destruction of the Temple." Having chosen to live in such isolation, the Jews "conceived of the rest of the world as *tref* [unkosher], as a source of infection and sin. . . . Well known are the pronouncements from Talmud . . . which from many points of view explain that a person of another religion cannot be considered human, . . . [that non-Jews] are animals with human faces, etc., etc." "What an indelible trace such education, beginning in childhood and continuing for 20 centuries," he exclaims, "would leave in one's soul!"

Shafarevich proceeds to present expressions of Jewish "wickedness and rancor" toward other peoples throughout their history. That these are, quite obviously, reactions to the traumas of oppression and persecution, Shafarevich does not see. He is so blind to the historical truth, in fact, that he cannot spot it in the very examples he cites. For instance, "Martov [Tsederbaum], recalling the fear he experienced as a three-year-old child during a pogrom [the crowd was dispersed by Cossacks before it had reached Tsederbaum's house], reflects: 'Would I be what I became, if on the pliable young soul the Russian reality had not left its rough stamp . . . ?' "

And so on, and so on. To compare the innuendos of Shafarevich to medieval anti-Jewish polemics would be almost to insult the latter. His style of anti-

DEFENSE OR DEBACLE?

"Provides vital insight....The authors force our attention to what is vital: global intervention in a nuclear world. It is highly recommended to all who struggle to keep hope alive."
--Reverend Jesse Jackson

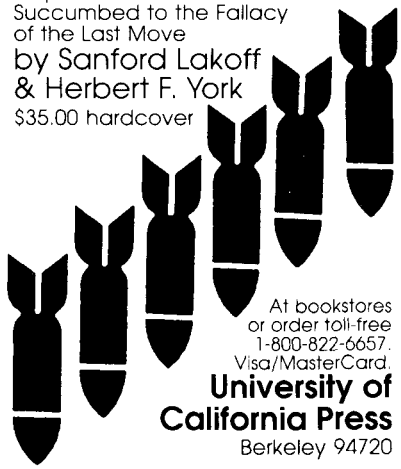
"An admirably forthright and lucid dissection of the appalling doctrines that have captured the arms culture."
--John Kenneth Galbraith

THE NUCLEAR SEDUCTION
Why the Arms Race Doesn't Matter--And What Does
by William A. Schwartz & Charles Derber
With Gordon Fellman, William Gamson, Morris S. Schwartz, & Patrick W. Withen
$25.00 hardcover

"A superb book--the best I have seen on SDI."
--Robert S. McNamara

The first comprehensive review and evaluation of the Strategic Defense Initiative, more popularly known as "Star Wars."

A SHIELD IN SPACE?
Technology, Politics and the Strategic Defense Initiative
How the Reagan Administration Set Out to Make Nuclear Weapons "Impotent and Obsolete" and Succumbed to the Fallacy of the Last Move
by Sanford Lakoff & Herbert F. York
$35.00 hardcover



At bookstores or order toll-free 1-800-822-6657. Visa/MasterCard.
University of California Press
Berkeley 94720

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Semitism would do credit to a Rosenberg; and indeed, at one point our Russian patriot is reminded that he has co-believers among National Socialists in Germany. This is the closest he ever comes to mentioning the Holocaust. "One has to listen frequently to the following argument," he says, "that many of the actions and sentiments of the Jews can be understood, if one recalls how much they had to experience. For example, some of Bialik's poems were written in reaction to a pogrom.... The question put this way hardly makes any sense. Does the humiliation of Germans by the Peace of Versailles justify the actions of National Socialism?" For our defender of human rights, the pogroms and the death camps were quite comparable to the German experience of humiliation by a peace treaty.

Shafarevich concludes that the Jewish manipulation of the national fate of Russia—that is, their desire to make it a Western-type democracy—will inevitably lead to "the new and the last catastrophe, after which, probably, nothing at all will be left of our people." In these conditions, the call to the Jews "to make the choice between the status of aliens without any political rights and citizenship based on the love of the fatherland," he says, acquires new actuality. (Of course, "the love of the fatherland" excludes democratic aspirations.) Words and ideas are powerless to fight the Jewish Westernist threat. But all is not lost. Remaining faithful to "the unique experience of the people" can help.

Shafarevich's position is not new. It was Hegel's, and the Romantic political philosopher and German nationalist Adam Mueller's, in the early 19th century; it was championed by the Slavophiles Kireevsky, Khomiakov, and Aksakov. But it is striking to see it advocated by an ostensible champion of human rights at the very moment when Russia declares its determination to rejoin the free world. Shafarevich calls for a return to autocracy—to the strong organic state without Marxism:

> The spiritual image of the people is formed during many centuries, during which the traditions of social existence, organically connected, are forged—and only if it is based on [those traditions] can the historical evolution create stable forms of life, natural for this people.... If following the advice [of the Russophobes] we abolish the role of the state ... the result could only be the speedy and complete disintegration.... [T]he state evidently should for a long time play a great role in the life of our country.

Shafarevich's treatise closes with a paean to "the People":

> A People is one of the most wonderful phenomena and enigmas of our Earth.... Belonging to one's People makes a man partake in History, in the mysteries of the past and the future.... [Through it] he can sense ... the significance and higher meaning of the earthly existence of humanity and his role in it.... In many ways it is beyond the powers of our comprehension, but frequently it is affectingly defenseless before our thoughtless intervention.... We have said what the People gives to man. Man, for his part, creates forces which strengthen the People and secure its existence.... When this two-tiered process decomposes, the same thing that happens in nature occurs: the habitat turns into a dead desert, and the man dies with it. Concretely, the interest in the fate of one's country vanishes, life becomes meaningless ... men turn into alcoholics or drug-addicts, women cease to bear children, the People becomes extinct.... This is the end to which the "Little People," constantly trying to destroy everything that supports the existence of "Big People," pushes us. Therefore the creation of the weapons of spiritual defense against it is a question of national self-defense.

There is more to *Russophobia*, of course, than its revolting anti-Semitism. Still, as in many other cases in history, the hatred of the Jews, expressed here by a Russian dissident, may acquire significance for the community of nations in general. For *Russophobia* is an expression of an important part of the Russian intellectual elite, of some of the movers and shakers behind the contemporary transformation of Russian society. It is a sobering occasion to consider some of the choices that Russia faces, choices often eclipsed in the excitement around Gorbachev. After all, a sudden urge for democracy experienced en masse by a huge society that lacks democratic traditions would be something of a miracle. This is not to say that miracles do not happen. But surely we cannot count on them. Igor Shafarevich, it is clear, detests communism. Is this good or bad? Does this make him an ally? Will the alternative to the falsely internationalist communism of the Soviet Union be the openly national socialism of Russia? •

The Fall of Economic Man

BY GEOFFREY HAWTHORN

Solomonic Judgements: Studies in the Limitation of Rationality by Jon Elster

(Cambridge University Press, 241 pp., $34.50, $12.95 paper)

The Cement of Society: A Study of Social Order by Jon Elster

(Cambridge University Press, 319 pp., $44.50, $15.95 paper)

Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences by Jon Elster

(Cambridge University Press, 192 pp., $34.50, $9.95 paper)

Economics is about how people make choices, the economist James Duesenberry remarked in the 1950s, and sociology is about how they don't have any choices to make. It was a deceptive complementarity. The sociologists whom Duesenberry had in mind talked of norms. It was norms, they claimed, that explained what people did. The best evidence for norms, however, was what people did. It was not, therefore, a compelling claim. In the 1960s, partly for this reason—and partly because it was the 1960s, when sociologists, like others, only more than most others, wanted to do better than gloss the surface of life—the talk turned to "structures." These were thought of as facts, mental or material, that were deeper and more enduring than convention, and even more constraining.

In Paris, indeed, it was said by some that people were no more than points at the intersection of structural forces, that structures actually defined what they were. (The idea lingers there still, though now the putative structures are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

texts and talk, their constitutive powers are thought to be more paradoxical, and construction is called deconstruction.) In cooler heads, however, and as the 1960s passed into the more cautious 1970s, the more commonsensical formulation was pursued further, and turned around. If structures constrained, how did they do so? The structuralists themselves were not forthcoming. Still, one answer was: by constraining choices. And choices we understand, or at least economists do. Perhaps sociology, some of its practitioners came to think, could take its erstwhile adversaries to heart and attack its long-standing question from the inside out.

Jon Elster has been prominent in pressing this view. He has also been prodigious in his exploration of it. His first work—which, as it happens, he did in Paris—was on Leibniz and Marx, rationalists of another stripe. He published *Leibniz et la formation de l'esprit capitaliste* in 1975, and ten years later a large book on *Making Sense of Marx*. (At the end of the book, he confessed his admiration for the master's guiding sentiments. In the book, he berated almost all his arguments.)

Elster's inclination has always been to what he calls a "methodological individualism." "There are no societies," he writes, "only individuals who interact with each other." And as he says again in *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, a review of the conclusions he has come to in the last 15 years, he has also been inclined to mechanisms rather than to general theories, to sociology on the model of an inductive chemistry, as he puts it, rather than a physics. And he likes parsimony.

It is easy to see why he has been drawn to the theory of rational choice. It speaks of the individual, it points to the fine grain, it promises to explain, it is elegant. But although he has pursued it in its headquarters at the University of Chicago (as well as in his native Oslo), he has always done so from an unusual position. And among those who have given time to it, Elster has arrived at an unusual conclusion: he has avoided abstract models, and he has come to all but abandon the theory itself.

All theorists of rational choice have agreed with Hobbes that "thoughts are to desires as Scouts and Spies, to range abroad, and find one way to the things desired." A rational act is the best way in which an agent can satisfy his desires, given his belief. (This assumes that his belief is the best he could form, given the evidence; and that the amount and quality of relevant evidence, given the nature and strength of his desire, is the best he could get.) His desires, beliefs, and actions must be consistent with themselves and with each other. An action must not only be rationalized by his desires and best beliefs, moreover, it must also be caused by these, and caused in the right way: by deliberative strength, not by mere weakness of will.

This is not to say, of course, that it is always—even often, even ever—safe to presume that there exists what Elster characterizes as "consistent, future-oriented, and instrumentally efficient behavior." "Introspection, casual observation, historical case studies and novels," he wisely concedes, "all suggest that irrationality is quite widespread." Still, rationality is, he claims, "normatively privileged." We *want* to be rational. And it is privileged in explanation also; even when we decide that people aren't rational in the sense that this theory suggests, we do so by starting from the assumption that they might have been rational, that they have the power to be rational. "Rationality is presupposed by any competing theory of motivation, whereas rationality itself does not presuppose anything else." The alternatives to rational choice theory, Elster remains convinced, are "more than nothing, but they do not quite amount to something either."

Elster is sensitive, however, to the evident thinness of rational choice theory. He is also sensitive to the charge that the emphasis on an instrumental rationality (what Charles Taylor calls, in his recent *Sources of the Self*, our "naturalism of disengaged reason") is either absent from many cultures, or is "but one norm among others" in our own. But these difficulties do not disturb him. Thinness can be thickened with example; and reasoning of the sort that the theory describes, if rarely simple, is at least widespread. We should question a derivation from the theory of rational choice, warns Elster, only if it fails to explain, or if, when it is deployed to recommend a course of action, it turns out to be "counterproductive on its own instrumental terms."

But there is the difficulty. The theory of rational choice does frequently fail to explain, and it can be counterproductive. Elster's interest, over and above his evident intelligence, lies in his having spent the past ten years, almost despite himself, showing how. In an early collection of essays, *Ulysses and the Sirens*, he explained how, like the eponymous hero, people often have to bind themselves into positions in which they can make no choice at all in order to sustain what they chose to do before. In another book, *Sour Grapes*, he explored some of the ways in which, when reasoned choice fails, people adapt their preferences to rationalize the choice away. In his new collection, *Solomonic Judgements*, he describes how rational acts can often subvert their own rationale. Whether the theory of rational choice is trying to explain what we do or to suggest what we should do, it is more often than not, Elster concludes, inadequate to the task, or simply indeterminate. *Solomonic Judgements* is, indeed, the most skeptical of Elster's sets of thoughts. He ends it by all but explicitly suggesting that people will often resist the conclusions to which their reasoning leads or, as in the Solomonic instance of child custody, will not be able to come to a reasoned conclusion at all.

But isn't it possible, asks Elster, to do better than this? Hasn't "the development of modern social science, together with vastly improved methods for data collection and computation," now made it "possible for people to be the masters of their fate?" That has certainly been

Two Young Trees Bending in Strong Wind

Vehement curtsies—
as if they compulsively
respect each other.

They bend to the same south
but toss heads differently.
Overeager, one shakes.
Courtly, the other nods.

On their recoil, sparrows dissect
the trees' airspace.
It is not kowtowing. It is twisting,

a motion to help the light
on half of each
reach most of each.

No one has given them a stake,
whalebone,
jib.

In an idiosyncrasy of wind,
I have seen them bow
towards each other

against the cloud-dark paint
of a subdivision wall.
Storm-beings,

young confusions
of bad weather and good manners,
they are mature like us already—

polite, driven.

SANDRA MCPHERSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the idea, and for more than 200 years a faith in the practical power of "rationality" has played a large part in implanting it. But the inadequacies and the indeterminacies of the theory, when refined, have led Elster to conclude that the faith was misplaced. To think that there is always a rational answer is "hyperrationalism," is itself irrational.

Where, then, if we are hopeful still of a general and orderly answer, do we turn? Models from the study of animals seem likely only to be able to explain the simplest sorts of human behavior, and are useless for trying to decide what to do. The options that are presently available in psychology ("prospect theory," or "generalized expected utility theory," or "regret theory") would seem to be too general. No. For explanations, we may have to go back to social norms. For prescriptions, we may have to go back to what such norms say to justice.

And that is just what Elster now does. But still he is baffled, for he cannot explain how norms arise. The economists' argument, that norms are devices with which to pursue our interests, does not explain why they are the devices; and an older sociological view, that they exist for a purpose, mixes up their possible consequences with their supposed cause, and gives no account of how they are produced. Moreover, although he is convinced that norms are rooted in our psychology, Elster cannot account for the fact that what he thinks of as "the propensity to feel shame and to anticipate sanctions by others at the thought of behaving in a certain, forbidden way" has what he calls "the grip on the mind" that it does. Norms are simply there, enjoining us to do this rather than that. And that, Elster has to concede, is that.

Or that is almost that. For it is not usually the case that for any situation in which we may find ourselves, there is just one norm. There will be several norms, and each may point us in a different direction. With that appetite for example that has always been one of the most attractive features of his work, and with his characteristic attention to detail, Elster tries to unravel the matter through a discussion of collective wage bargaining in Sweden.

He explains at the start of *The Cement of Society* that it was an invitation from the Swedish Council for Management and Work Life Issues to look at this issue that crystallized what he now admits is his deep disquiet. He leapt at it because he thought that wage negotiations would yield to formal models of bargaining and collective action. In the event, however, they were complicated, and resisted the models. But Elster would not accept defeat. He tried to find a new relation of a general kind "between individual and collective rationality, and between self-interest and social norms." As usual, he teases out the fine twists. (He is a mechanic, and has none of what he calls the historian's pride in "hiding the scaffolding" of an argument.)

But when he spells out the norms that are in play in the negotiations, and connects them with the interests at stake, he shows that the final twist is once again indeterminate. There are many norms that can plausibly be invoked in the course of such bargaining in Sweden; the number, he remarks in passing, may even run into three figures. The proliferation makes agreement difficult: as the negotiations go on, the protagonists skip from one norm to another, and make each other skeptical of their sincerity about any. Yet this also makes agreement easier, for in the skipping about, nobody takes any norm too seriously. "The net effect is anybody's guess." Elster, and rational choice theory, are now almost completely defeated. Having been reluctant "to get into a morass of ad hoc assumptions," he agrees that there is no way in which his program can be "brought forward on this narrow basis. Ultimately, parsimony must take second place to realism."

He is almost defeated, but will not surrender. For the general questions remain. What is the cement of society? What *does* cause people to be as predictable as they are, and to cooperate? Elster still wants general answers, and he gives some: a degree of envy, he proposes at the end of *The Cement of Society*; opportunism; and a modicum of credibility. To avoid envy is to conform, but to give in to it is to work for social goods that might reduce it. To be too opportunistic—to corrupt others, for instance—is to risk subverting an established order; but not to be opportunistic enough is to submit to an order that may benefit too few. To be credible is to be predictable, but to be too credible—in threats, for example—is to invite destruction. Similar motives and mechanisms can have contrary effects. "Each society and each community will be glued together, for better and for worse, by a particular, idiosyncratic mix. But the basic ingredients that go into the cement seem to be more or less the same in all societies, even if they can be combined in innumerable ways."

There is one ingredient, however, that Elster repeatedly underrates. It is, loosely speaking, culture. This is not to say that he does not see it; in the Swedish wage negotiations, he reports, what is at issue are not only the rules of the game, the payoffs, and the range of acceptable arguments, but also the identity of the actors. He even invents an example to explain what he means. A man will pay a boy ten dollars to mow his lawn. The boy asks for $11, and the man refuses. He would rather mow it himself than pay that sum. A neighbor then offers him $20 to mow a similar lawn. He refuses, and in so doing, he appears irrational. For in turning down the boy, he suggested that the labor was worth at most $11. But in turning down the neighbor, he indicates that it's worth at least $21. The answer to the puzzle, says Elster, "must be that he does not think of himself as the kind of person who mows other people's lawns."

But this explanation, together with the details of the wage bargaining, reveals more than Elster will allow. It suggests that norms may have a cognitive component that embodies, rather than follows from, what an empiricist psychology wants to distinguish as desire. Elster does acknowledge that someone's choices might be governed by the kind of person that she has come to experience herself to be. But he does not acknowledge that she might have any motive for this other than a preconceived interest or a wish not to be sanctioned. He does not acknowledge, in other words, that her choices might instead be governed by the kind of person that she *imagines* herself to be, or that she *wants* to become. The idea of a distinctively, perhaps even an irreducibly, social or cultural identity, complicated, and for the parsimonious man promiscuously rich, is "elusive" for Elster. The argument that norms serve to mark it is "hard to evaluate"; and he will say no more about it.

And yet surely we are as often preoccupied by what it is good to be as we are by what it is good to do. Norms, in short, can be constitutive. And their constitutive character can be compelling. What they allow us to be, in our own eyes and in the eyes of others, can give us, in Taylor's phrase, "moral sources of empowerment," a decisive and directive notion of the good.

It's true that this is not an easy notion to grasp. It's also true that in some hands, arguably in Taylor's hands, it verges on the mystical, or at least remains mysterious. (Taylor insists that we are more than solitary and instrumental subjects, manipulating each other and the external world in a calculating manner. He wants us to transcend the thin partialities and the concomitantly thin reasoning that we've unreflectively inherited from the 17th centu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ry in order to recover a fuller sense of self, what he calls a "wholeness," a wider "epiphany" with ourselves and with each other.) But one does not have to go all the way with Taylor to concede that separately and together, in one culture after another, and in the post-modern world on one occasion after another, "we" do select, combine, and in our more imaginative moments even invent, identities that are simply their own end.

It is conceivable, as Elster himself would no doubt wish, that the way in which these identities develop and deepen is a subject for psychology. The difficulty there, as so often in the human sciences, would be to find a formulation general enough to capture most of the cases and yet refined enough to pick each out as the distinctive case it is. At present, Proust has more to say to this than the social scientists. Literature and the other arts indicate why identities are often so rich, even if they are, for most practical projects, so functionally redundant.

For the purposes of public practice, however, of trying to find a way in which people like us can live with each other, the proliferation of identities does require a rationality. The rationality it requires, however, is not the kind that Elster has had in mind. And this is not only because of the failures of rational choice theory that he himself has exposed. The rationality required by culture is one that recognizes the ways in which, and the extent to which, moral notions are embedded in our descriptions of ourselves and each other, and in our respective projects, the way in which they elide the line between emotion and cognition. It is a rationality that still insists that the inevitable (and often irreducible) conflicts between these projects are matters not only for private calculation, but also for public debate. As Elster himself once put it, though in a different context, it would be a rationality for the forum rather than the market. There is no guarantee, of course, that the result will be, in his words, "adequate" to the matter at hand, let alone "determinate." But deliberation and discussion could be strength enough. From them, rules of procedure might emerge. And an agreement on such rules is one condition—in morally and politically plural and confused societies like our own, it is perhaps the only sure condition—of a more substantive accord.

Having now, it seems, ended his tortured and enlightening tryst with rational choice, this is where Elster points. In this respect, he is at one with an increasing number of reformed methodologi-

You deserve to know the facts about. . .

"Land for Peace"

Can it solve the problems of the Middle East?

There has been much emphasis for years, intensified in recent months, on the "land for peace" formula to solve the long-simmering problems of the Middle East. Translating this slogan into plain English means that Israel should surrender Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank") and Gaza to the Arabs. They would establish a Palestinian state. Once that happened, it is thought that peace and tranquility would soon come to the troubled Middle East.

What are the facts?

■ The concept of "land for peace" is a totally new one in the history of the world. It was formulated for one specific purpose only, namely to persuade and pressure Israel to give up territories that it has administered since the Six-Day War of 1967. By its victory in that war, Israel wound up in possession of these territories. Contrary to what many are led to believe, the "West Bank," the focus of today's attention, had never been part of any Arab country. It was part of Palestine, a territorial unit that, by the Mandate of the League of Nations and in line with the Balfour Declaration, had been designated as a national home for the Jewish people.

■ Thus, while the concept of "land for peace" is a brand-new one, the concept that to the victor belong the spoils is as old as history itself and had really never been questioned before the days of the Israel-Arab conflict. Our own country, of course, following its Manifest Destiny, has benefited greatly and has consolidated its territory by applying this motto. But Israel followed a different path. From the day of victory in 1967, it waited for an offer of peace from the Arabs. But that offer never came. Instead, immediately following the war, the Arabs pronounced their three unalterable "no's:" no recognition, no negotiation, and no peace with Israel.

■ In 1977, President Sadat of Egypt traveled to Jerusalem and presented a peace plan to the Israeli government. The Israelis eagerly embraced his suggestion. In exchange for peace and normalization of relations with its neighbor, Israel returned to Egypt the vast Sinai peninsula, together with the city of Yamit; some of the most advanced military installations in the world; the port and naval installations of Sharm-el-Sheik, which safeguard Israel's access to its port of Eilat; and the oil fields that Israel had developed and which had made Israel self-sufficient in its energy requirements. And, of course, Israel also gave up the natural buffer against aggression that the Suez Canal and the strategic depth of the Sinai itself provided. It was a first in history. Never before in the chronicle of mankind had the victor returned conquered territory to the vanquished in order to attain peace.

■ One would expect that the concept of "land for peace" would work both ways. After all, should not the Arabs also make some territorial sacrifices for peace? Unfortunately, that is not the case. Every inch of land held by the Arabs is considered "holy Arab soil" and its possession by the "infidels" (Christians or Jews) is inadmissible, intolerable, a blasphemy and a case for "jihad" (holy war). No compromise, no concession is ever possible. The way the "Taba issue" was finally resolved further illustrates the Arab belief that the "land for peace" principle is basically a one-way street.

■ The "land for peace" formulation is now applied mostly to the Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and Gaza regions. Israel's foes, but also some of its friends, urge Israel to yield these regions to the Arabs, in exchange for "peace." But there is no peace, and no peace will come about by Israel's giving up this area of vital strategic importance to those who are its sworn enemies and who have declared over and over again that they wish to use this land as their launching pad for the final attempt at the destruction of Israel. The conflict in the area is not only between Israel and the "Palestinians." It is first of all between Israel and the Arab nations. With the single exception of Egypt, virtually all of them are still in a state of war with Israel.

To none of the Arab countries has the possibility ever occurred of *their* trading land for peace, for instance yielding the "West Bank" to Israel for the sake of peace. Not one of these countries has even hinted that they would make peace with Israel if Israel yielded the administered territories to the Arabs. There isn't even a gesture of accommodation, such as a lifting of the over 40-year-old Arab economic boycott against Israel, an apology for the odious slander that Zionism is Racism, or a discontinuation of the yearly charade in the United Nations, in which the Arab states attempt to expel Israel from that body. For the victor to yield land for peace to the vanquished is a new idea—who knows, it might even be a good one. But it surely would have to work both ways in order to be valid and effective.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
Gerardo Joffe, President
(fly. Western Regional Director of CAMERA)
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-deductible, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is to combat media inaccuracies, through public education and publicity. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in newspapers and magazines. Our overhead is minimal. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work and for these clarifying messages.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

$ _____. NR/25

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: FLAME, P.O. Box 590359, San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cal individualists, of philosophers and social scientists (and even a few of the broader economists) who hoped, only a decade or so ago, to derive a comprehensive explanation and a moral map from calculations of individual interest alone. Yet Elster's revised hopes are not high. "Perceptions of procedural justice," he remarks in passing, are as variable and contingent as the norms on which they rest; they are "local, context-specific, and bound up with accidents of history and politics." If this, too, is true, then social scientists have a further reason to abandon their parsimonious foreclosures and turn to thicker descriptions of what is, and to the complex particulars of practical politics. And if they still insist on generalities, they may have to take the idea of society seriously again.

GEOFFREY HAWTHORN teaches sociology and politics at Cambridge University.

Aaron's Rod

BY SVEN BIRKERTS

Brooklyn Boy by Alan Lelchuk

(McGraw-Hill, 304 pp., $19.95)

From the start of his career as a novelist, Alan Lelchuk has had a reputation as a bad boy, not a *real* bad boy of the old Burroughs/Genet stamp, more the kind who puts horns over the teacher's head in the class picture. His novels, *American Mischief*, *Shrinking*, *Miriam at Thirty-Four*, and *Miriam in Her Forties*, are brash. They all have something of that "prurience" that people went on about back when "Banned in Boston" was for real. Sexual interest aside, though, these works—the first three, certainly—are also valuable documents from the long-interred era of liberation and anti-authoritarian free-thinking. The more recent Miriam novel (1989) is a brave effort at coming to terms with diminished cultural and personal expectations. It is a portrait from our time.

If Lelchuk has not stood forth in the first rank of novelists, it may be in part because the times have turned against his brand of outspokenness. It may also have to do with the fact that Philip Roth has always gotten to the same subjects first, writing of the guilt and sexual aggression of the emancipated Jew, and the half-comic, half-tragic involutions of the therapeutic process. Lelchuk has remained one row back, putting up horns.

What happens to bad boys as the years come on? Some, like Burroughs, get defanged by the media and their own cult status. Others, like Mailer, seem to mellow of their own accord. Lelchuk, if his novel/memoir *Brooklyn Boy* is any indication, has set out to reinvent himself from scratch: he has tried to rewrite his story as that of Jack Armstrong, all-American boy. Well, that's a slight exaggeration. No contortion of prose is going to make Jack Armstrong out of someone named Aaron Schlossberg. But the impulse to turn the son of a Russian immigrant into a baseball-loving, hot-dog-munching, gee-whiz American kid is very strong—so strong that it all but swamps the sharp tensions of assimilation that are this book's real subject.

Brooklyn Boy is a surprisingly conventional bildungsroman. Its unpredictable switches between the first and third person alert us to the extent to which this is the author's own story. The novel carries its hero Aaron from late boyhood through late adolescence. It leaves him, in the time-honored tradition of the genre, on the threshold of manhood. Aaron's growing up is rendered in distinct and mainly chronological episodes.

We first meet him as a boy living in cramped lower-middle-class circumstances in late 1940s Brooklyn. His father, Harry, is a staunchly unassimilated fellow traveler of indeterminate occupation and income. He lives for his weekly meetings with like-minded cronies, and for screenings of old Revolution-era Russian films. Except for a mysterious devotion to boxing matches, he despises the ways of his adopted country. Aaron's mother, soft, well-meaning, and fundamentally passive, is scarcely a presence.

Lelchuk's initial episodes center upon the immemorial struggle between the immigrant father and his willful son. Aaron is giddy with the desire to be one of the boys, to be "regular." He makes trouble at school, ogles pretty little girls, hangs out with the neighborhood gang. Mostly, though, he listens to, dreams, and plays baseball. Baseball is, for Aaron, the American code: to play the game and to master the lore of statistics is to gain admission to the real America. Baseball is his Ellis Island.

The heroes of Aaron's beloved Dodgers bestride the land like so many colossi. And the generational struggle, naturally enough, also revolves around baseball. To Harry Schlossberg, it is a nonsensical game. He is determined to raise the boy in his own image, and so long as he wields power he drags Aaron to his meetings and his movies, and pressures him to play chess against his friends and their sons. Aaron must oblige. But one afternoon the power base abruptly shifts. Aaron goes for a match with a certain Sammy Goichberg and finds his father in bed with Sammy's mother. The days of Harry's rule—and his marriage—are over.

Here Lelchuk plays an unsettling trick with time. He narrates the dissolution of the marriage in a few sentences and then, almost immediately, installs a live-in lover to replace the banished father. No sooner have we absorbed these rather large kernels of information, however, than we are back in a previous phase, with father and son warring over baseball. Aaron is skipping school to go to Ebbets Field with an older upstairs neighbor, and Harry is trying to lay down the law. Aaron keeps transgressing; he finally wins through sheer persistence. The inexplicable time shift, alas, checks the reader's momentum and reduces the effect of the victory.

Finally Lelchuk's father-son material holds more in promise than it delivers in execution. He makes the confrontations, surely the main psychological fact of Aaron's existence, obvious and perfunctory. Rarely does he catch the wracking ambivalence that lives at the core of these conflicts, ambivalence not only in the sense of love blending with hatred, but also of pride entwined with shame. Only once, really, does he break through the formulaic patter of their face-offs to root out the nerve of sensibility. In this one instance, Aaron and his father are walking home from a night at the ring. Aaron is elated, not by what happened at the fights, but by what he saw when he looked over at his father. He saw that odd, funny-looking man acting just like a normal red-blooded male, rooting and shouting. Just then, a rain shower breaks, and the two begin to run:

> Rain fell swiftly and hard, and to my surprise, Papa laughed and called over, "Come, silly boy, come!" And he was actually running. He ran funny, swaying his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hips from side to side like a girl, and sort of using his elbows, not arms, but his strength gave him his speed.

A lovely moment, this, tender and excruciating. In the precision of his description, Lelchuk has dared the hard kind of exposure.

Aaron's coming of age proceeds. After the struggles for autonomy, after the father is gone, the emphasis of the narrative changes. Aaron is shown taking up sports reporting, the first hint of a future vocation. He starts frequenting the school library, where he meets and falls in love with the pretty West Indian librarian. She returns the interest for a short time, and then—like father—suddenly drops out of Aaron's life. His heart is scored.

The next major phase comes in late high school when Aaron takes a job in the city. He becomes "fiction boy" at Schulte's bookstore. Working deep in the basement stacks, he not only learns what worlds are to be found between the covers of books, but he also gets a schooling in another kind of sporting life. The elevator man, a black wheeler-dealer named Jackson, runs a gaming and whoring establishment right next to the bookstore basement. (Blacks are presented mainly by way of negative stereotypes throughout the book; an earlier incident had Aaron robbed at knifepoint by a tough-talking black from a rival school.) Aaron conquers what few inhibitions he has and is soon an initiate in the major vices.

It is during this same bookstore period, a period of accelerated maturing, that Aaron decides that he must break free of Brooklyn and find adventure. He takes a precipitous early leave from high school and signs up as a deckhand on a Norwegian ship. He is transported, more suddenly than he had thought possible, from the back streets of Brooklyn to the open seas, then to the African coast. "Not bad," he thinks, as the ship moves up the Congo River, "not bad at all." Privy throughout to Aaron's flights of fancy, we know how to complete the thought: not bad for a Brooklyn boy.

These words, we may also remember, are the recurrent tag line in the books of another Brooklyn bad boy: Henry Miller. Time and again in the course of his expatriated adventurings, Miller (or one of his stand-in speakers) will rear back with a triumphant: "Not bad for a Brooklyn boy!" And in that exclamation we hear a double note. Pride of place, of origin, commingles with the sense that Brooklyn is also a burden that one can get free of only through tremendous exertion. It is a place to be *from*, a place to escape. The

Put the whole world at your fingertips, with . . .

Venturer MultiBand Receiver

Only $99.95*

But read the ad for an even better deal!

•We have a small monthly allotment of the Venturer 2, same as the standard Venturer, but it also plays cassette tapes. It costs $30 more—$129.95. The "special deal"—3 for the price of 2—is also available for this model.

The *Venturer* Receiver gives you crisp reception over the full ten bands of the radio spectrum, including, of course, the entire AM/FM range. But you can also roam the international shortwave and ham radio bands (4 to 12 mHz) for information from all over the world. And you can pick up the TV-audio from channels 2 to 13, a great way to keep up with your favorite programs. But there is more: Listen to 24-hr. reports of the U.S. Weather Bureau, and get news of all support services—police, fire, ships, and civil defense. Then there is the aircraft band, and all 40 channels of the CB band. The *Venturer* works off your 110-volt house current, off batteries, or off any external 12-V. DC source.

We import *Venturers* in container loads and can offer them for just $99.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $199.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Take advantage of this special offer and order your *Venturer MultiBand Receiver(s)* today!

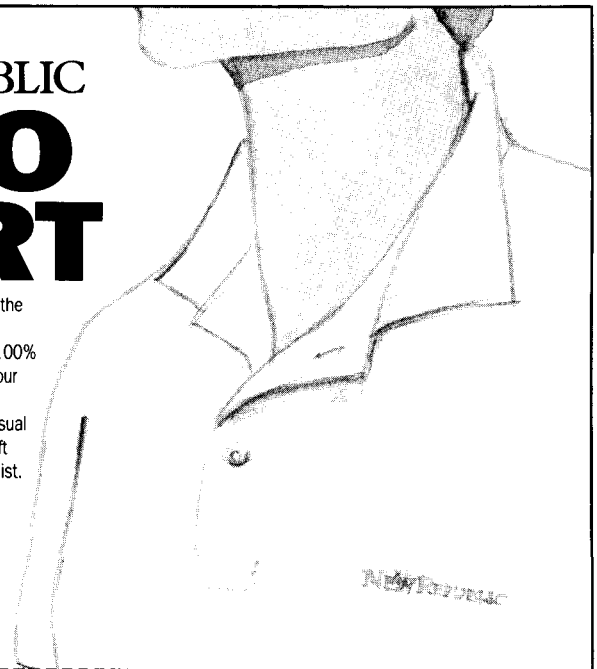
FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 882-3050
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Please give order **#1195A188** for the *MultiBand Receiver,* and for the cassette version, give order **#1196A188.** If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. We cannot ship without this information.

UPS/insurance: $6.95 for one *Venturer MultiBand Receiver,* $8.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return privilege and one year warranty.

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

THE NEW REPUBLIC

POLO SHIRT



The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: The New Republic polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our attractive new logo, The New Republic polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. The New Republic polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes, small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $1.25 per shirt for shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.

To: THE NEW REPUBLIC POLO SHIRT OFFER, 1220 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

Please send me _____ polo shirt(s) in size(s) _____.

I have enclosed a check/money order in the amount of _____ to cover the cost of the shirt ($24.50 each) plus shipping ($1.25 each) plus applicable sales tax (D.C. Residents add 6%.) My address is:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refrain itself, its recurrence, suggests that one never really does get away.

There is, incidentally, an interesting lineage that we might consider here—the lineage of Brooklyn-born (or reared) male writers, which is also, perhaps not coincidentally, a lineage of what might charitably be called youthful enthusiasts. First, naturally, there is Whitman, the original yea-saying American boy. Then, some years later, Miller, who incorporates Whitman, citing him throughout his books as a presiding figure of freedom and imagination. Then comes Mailer (born in New Jersey, but raised, and living, in Brooklyn)—he does for Miller what Miller did for Whitman. Finally we have Lelchuk, singing Miller's awe-struck refrain. All four writers uphold priapism and sexual frankness; all four tout, in their separate ways, the intensity and variousness of city life. Picture them packed one inside the other like so many Russian *katrinka* dolls—with Whitman, the grandest and most enduring, holding the others like a mother.

Within this grouping, the greatest similarity is to be found between Lelchuk and Miller. In both we see the same sharp split between the bravado of the emancipated male on the one hand, and the simplistic and sentimental reverence for the boyhood self on the other. When Miller turns from his "adult" exploits to write about his Brooklyn boyhood, his voice takes on a cloying good-boy sweetness: we long immediately for the return of the cynical philanderer. The same holds true for Lelchuk. The aggressions and the energies that a blocked and difficult childhood created in him, which can break out with such surprising verve in *his* adult novels, disappear when he looks back to track their source. The writing, instead of showing sinew and drive, turns pasteboard.

Listen to this snatch of dialogue between Aaron and his friends:

> "Forget the Dodgers, come September and they'll blow it!" said Alan Kamph, die-hard Yankee fan. "Yeah, the Cards look strong again," worried Ronald Tavel. "And don't forget 'Spahn and Sain and two days of rain,'" scholarly Jerry said, referring to the Braves and their pitchers. "Aah, Brooklyn will murder those guys," asserted Morty Kassover, street bully and Dodger fanatic.

This sounds far too much like those boys' books that older relatives were always giving as presents, with the kind of decent "true-to-life" boyness that got promulgated in scouting manuals and *Boys' Life* magazine.

Alan Lelchuk's natural gifts find little room for play in this memoir. He has hobbled himself. I suspect that at some moment he recognized that he had a very representative story to tell, and decided to reach after the archetypal presentation. Unfortunately, Lelchuk cannot cut away the patina of the emblematic in order to get at the nastier and more hurtful life beneath: the very thing he does so effectively in his other books. This is the book to give your grandson if you are a well-meaning grandparent and he is a bright pip of a lad. Others may want to wait for the bad boy's return.

SVEN BIRKERTS is the author of *The Electric Life: Essays on Modern Poetry* (Morrow).

Upstairs, Downstairs

BY DANIEL T. RODGERS

The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900 by Stuart M. Blumin

(Cambridge University Press, 447 pp., $49.50, $14.95 paper)

Was there ever a conviction woven so entirely out of wish fulfillment as the myth of American classlessness? Take a skein of evidence from Tocqueville—never mind that Tocqueville's conversations with Americans outside the merchant and legal elite had been few and far from penetrating. Entwine that with the experience of the postwar economic boom, miraculous enough to inspire predictions of wholesale *embourgeoisement*. Add (after what had seemed the near thing of the 1930s) the American exemption from the peculiar mix of class and politics characteristic of industrialized Europe. "The most universal American trait," *Fortune Magazine*'s editors wrote with relief in 1940, was "a rejection of the idea that classes, proletarian or plutocratic, exist among us." How else was the forestalled revolution to be explained, except as a consequence of a breakdown in America of its Marxian motors? No Marxian revolution, no American classes.

Language in America, however, always had it otherwise. Servant and gentleman, mechanic and merchant, mill "hand" and mill owner, poor white and "quality" folk, worker and boss, slave and master: they outnumber the countervailing terms of equality (neighbor, citizen, patriot, folks) by legions. Nineteenth-century economists, for all their zeal to reconcile the interests of "labor" and "capital," would not have known how to begin without the dualism. The "ever-present contest" between "the wealth-absorbers and the wealth-producers" was the way the American Federation of Labor drew the line in the 1890s. These were not simply terms of affinity; they had little in common with such horizontal groupings as Methodist, iron worker, Rotarian, or wheat farmer. They were terms of vertical power and vertical relationship, terms of pain and pretension. The logic of inequality paired them all. Without them, American speech is but a sliver of its tough, gnarled self.

Language was, indeed, on the minds of *Fortune*'s editors in 1940. The occasion for their celebration was a specially commissioned poll, from which it appeared that an astonishing 80 percent of Americans identified themselves as "middle class." Classlessness indeed. But wishes make questions, and questions their own answers. The *Fortune* survey offered three choices: upper, middle, and lower class. To those groping for admissible answers (some volunteered they were of the "Negro class," some the "foreign class"), only "middle class" made a live contact with everyday speech. But when pollsters endowed with a better ear substituted "working class" for "lower class," the putative middle-class majority instantly shrank by half. Add the category "poor" and a lot of Americans (up to 28 percent of all black Americans in a poll of 1975) are ready to take it, too.

Vernaculars of class are not only old, they are present and persistent. But they are not unchanging. "Working class" was a linguistic product of the early 19th century, slowly eclipsing an older vocabulary of "mechanics," "artisans," and "laborers" as the economic props of artisan livelihood began to shake and topple. "Middle class" was a somewhat later invention. Put into currency in the 1850s, it still vied with older, more elastic covering terms: the "middling classes" or "middling sort." But the shift was no mere conversational fad. It represented a narrowing and deepening of eco-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nomic identity, from "middlingness" to business acumen, as the storekeepers, workshop proprietors, and small traders of the early 19th-century cities emerged from the economic and social shadow of the half-idle rentiers and came into moral and entrepreneurial confidence.

The fruits of that transition are hardly in doubt, but the process still tantalizes historians. Two small upstate New York cities bear most of the interpretive burden. In Rochester between 1825 and 1835, in a city swept over by revivalistic Protestantism, Paul Johnson in *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revival in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* sketched a middle class virtually bursting into being, as an old set of paternal social relations snapped and were replaced by new forms of work- and self-discipline. One hundred thirty miles to the east, in Utica, Mary Ryan in *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* showed a middle class coming into being without the midwifery of economic strain or workplace crisis—through the agency of women's domestic reform associations. If Johnson's scheme piled too much explanatory weight on a dramatic rupture of social authority (nowhere else did crises in family discipline, work, and religion come to so neat a common head), Ryan's much more complex sense of change all but evades schematic distillation. Nor is it altogether clear that they had the same phenomenon in view. Factory and parlor, wage relations and family sentimentality: the two faces of the 19th-century middle class are still hard to embrace within a single conceptual frame, even with as oozy a noun as "emergence."

Stuart Blumin's book is the most important effort to date to bring the question of middle-class formation into the critical caldron of social change in early 19th-century America in the seaboard cities. The best of his evidence is from Philadelphia, whose social history he has mined with diligence and ingenuity. (There are appropriate comparisons with New York and Boston.) That so much intelligent effort seems, in the end, to count for so little is a measure not of the book's weaknesses but of the difficulty that the historian experiences swimming against the myth of classlessness.

In the 18th-century American city, the most important line of social cleavage, Blumin maintains, was between the middling and the rich. Shopkeepers, master craftsmen, and artisans all lived on the nether side of that divide: only the revolutionary crisis forced their invitation into the tight inner circles of urban politics. Yet by the middle of the 19th century, flush with new wealth and ambitions, these "previously humble or ambiguously placed 'middling folk' " had succeeded in drawing "society's most critical boundary below, rather than above, the smaller businessmen, now that so many of them no longer shared the social stigma of manual labor with wage-earning mechanics."

An acutely juxtaposed pair of illustrations incapsulates Blumin's point. Both are of tailors' shops. The first, published in 1836, was even then awash in nostalgia. Only a single room is shown, crowded with bolts of cloth and five laboring men. Two are seated cross-legged on the counter, journeymen tailors at their sewing. The shop's owner and two assistants are busy measuring a customer. The shears lie at the owner's elbow, a sign of whose cloth will be cut and who will do the cutting. This is hardly a depiction of economic democracy; but there is a crowded rubbing of elbows, and perhaps of status, too. The second print, published in 1874, is still more crowded with figures. A female sewing machine operator is at work in a corner of the print, along with a male presser and the two enduring cross-legged male tailors. But this time the shears are not at the master's elbow; they are in the hands of a specialist, a cutter. Indeed, the shop-owner is no longer to be found in the same room with his five employees at all. He is ensconced in a front room, attending to a customer.

Several lines of inquiry unfold from these wonderfully paired iconographies of work. The motif Blumin chooses to follow is that of space: the master tailor's new room of his own. Small shopowners and tradesmen, Blumin sets out to demonstrate, led a life increasingly separate from their wage-hands and employees. They gravitated toward different clubs; they lived in bigger dwellings and furnished them more elaborately; they performed increasingly distinct tasks; they possessed more. In the relatively small and compact cities of the first half of the 19th century, residentially stratified suburbs barely existed. But though Philadelphia's main thoroughfares still housed a democratic motley of urban folk, the side streets, Blumin shows with great ingenuity, had become distinctly stratified.

Along these lines, Blumin offers an extraordinarily specific, often tactile portrait of early Philadelphia. One can virtually see the furniture on these inventory lists arranged before one's eyes: the piano, the Brussels carpet, the mirror, and the oil painting in manufacturer Joseph Bacon's parlor; the single picture, the handful of books, the bird and the bird cage in machinist Felix Campbell's best

Want to brush up on a foreign language?

With Audio-Forum's intermediate and advanced materials, it's easy to maintain and sharpen your foreign language skills.

Besides intermediate and advanced audio-cassette courses—most developed for the U.S. State Dept.—we offer foreign-language mystery dramas, dialogs recorded in Paris, games, music, and many other helpful materials. And if you want to learn a *new* language, we have beginning courses for adults and for children.

We offer introductory and advanced materials in most of the world's languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Greek, Russian, Portuguese, Korean, Norwegian, Swedish, and many others.

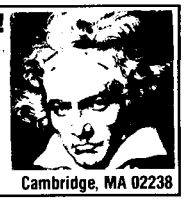
Call 1-800-243-1234 for FREE 32-p. catalog, or write:

AUDIO-FORUM®
Room M224, 96 Broad Street,
Guilford, CT 06437 (203) 453-9794

Classical MusicLovers' Exchange®
Nationwide link between unattached music lovers.
CMLE, Box 31, Pelham, N.Y. 10803

HOME STUDY COURSE
in economics. A 10-lesson study that will throw light on today's baffling problems. Tuition free—small charge for materials.
Write Henry George Institute, 121 E. 30th Street, New York, NY 10016

CLASSIC T-SHIRTS!
Beethoven, Hemingway, Da Vinci, Jung, J.F.K., Mozart, Shakespeare, Cheshire Cat, Twain, Darwin, Van Gogh, Gandhi, Nietzsche, Poe, Thoreau, Austen, Sherlock Holmes, others.
T-Shirt: (white or lt. blue) $12.25, 4/$44.
Sweatshirt: (white or grey) $21, 2/$40.
Sizes: S, M, L, XL. **Ship:** $2.00 per order.
Illustrated brochure: 75¢
Historical Products, Box 220 CW **Cambridge, MA 02238**



HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY
by E. Waterhouse Allen
Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.
BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

room. We can watch of a Sunday morning Capt. Josiah Homewood and Dr. Wilson Pile stride past their neighborhood Presbyterian church to a tonier Presbyterian congregation downtown.

"The experience of class in the 19th-century city can be understood in no small degree as the process by which people were brought together and kept apart, attracted to one another and repelled, and as the effects that resulting social networks had on the way people lived and perceived themselves as living in society." This is the Sabbath stroll of the captain and the doctor in a nutshell. But what does this have to do with class? Blumin's lines of inquiry are relentlessly horizontal. Who flocked with whom? Who shared a common wealth quartile, established place in "a homogeneous group, set off in a particular way from other groups"? Class, he takes it, is a "primarily and distinctly categorical" conception. It "suggests neither an individual's relation to individuals of other classes, nor a necessary relation, hierarchical or otherwise, between one class and another." Done in this vein, laptop computer and binoculars in hand, the study of class formation is cousin to the mapping of bird flocks and nesting patterns. Space and likeness rule.

But was this much imaginative investigative effort necessary to tell us that those with similar amounts and similar sources of wealth sought one another out in the 19th-century city? Only measurement against a historically unreal notion of the classless small town—and against a mythic notion of a classless America—could have pressed an inquiry into class formation into so inadequate a form.

Of the bigger and tougher questions that leap from this wealth of detail, the most insistent is vertical. What relations did these masters and cross-legged tailors sustain with one another (and, no less important, with these new women in the trade)? The middle class was the employing class par excellence: wages and trade were its sustenance as fully as rents, land speculation, and slaves sustained the landowning elites. On this score, the picture Blumin reconstructs is simply blank. There is much here about wealth-holding patterns, but virtually nothing about the middle class's economic activities; much about residential spaces, but barely a word about who got into this emerging middle class or how easy it was to do so; much about status, but nothing about the credit and wage relations that, binding the middle class to those above and below, were the very stuff of its formation.

If Blumin's portrait of the middle class fails to offer any sense of vertically ordered power, it barely does better with questions of consciousness and inferiority. The book began, he tells us, in a rereading of the antebellum diary of Nathaniel Booth, a small-town grocer, bookkeeper, and merchant. Perhaps the evidence failed, perhaps this strenuous swimming upstream to establish the existence of a middle class exhausted him. At any rate, there is disappointingly little here about that class's inner world of values. What Blumin's diarist or his like thought of family, sentiment, or (as Johnson would have it) "Christian self-control" is largely for the reader to guess.

Blumin is alert to the disdain for muscle-wrenching work that was at the center of shopkeepers' vocational identity (though it hardly fit the heaving of barrels and tins that also fell to their lot). But his suggestion that the new boundaries of class were laid along the "manual-nonmanual fault line" abandons the business of consciousness (and economics) altogether to a pair of anachronistic census categories. The emergence of the "nonmanual class"? Nathaniel Booth would not have had a clue to the words' meaning. Not in 1850—and still less as employers began to recruit a separate army of cheaply paid, nonmanual employees from the daughters and wives of the "manual labor" class.

What urban Americans understood—often with pride, though more often with pain—was the open fact of a class-stratified society. For that much, a computer was not necessary. It was etched, as it still is, in the American language itself.

DANIEL T. RODGERS teaches history at Princeton University and is the author of *Contested Truths: Keywords in American Politics Since Independence* (Basic Books).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

America. "There have been few Catholic writers," we're told, as "[most] had no interest in writing about their religion." But we've long accustomed ourselves to the notion of Judaism as a *cultural* category, and surely it's cultural coherence that justifies interest in our great Jewish writers. It's also noteworthy that all the Catholic writers Bell notes were Irish-Americans: Fitzgerald, O'Hara, O'Connor, McCarthy, Powers, and Farrell. But let's add O'Neill, Kennedy, Donleavy, McHale, Flanagan, Toole, Dunne—and Betty Smith, whose *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is the closest ancestor to Gordon's work.

JOHN JOYCE NERBONNE
Redwood City, California

TRB *continued from page 4*

[a] 19.8% part-time quantitative integration credit,' " and so on, drones one brief in the current case. But the civil rights debate is often based on exaggerated notions of the importance and accuracy of meritocracy.

For example, the Supreme Court ruled this month on a case involving academic tenure. It unanimously rejected the argument that universities should be exempt from having to reveal private evaluation files when they are sued for illegal discrimination. Conservatives on the Court must privately relish the notion of giving liberal academics a taste of their own medicine. The academics protested that tenure decisions are much too sensitive and subjective to survive the routine rigors of civil rights litigation. And in a way they are right. It is next to impossible to prove scientifically that this man was more deserving of tenure than that woman; and anything short of scientific proof spells trouble in a discrimination lawsuit. Yet admit that and you have undermined the case for tenure itself. Why should the difference between lifetime job security and no job at all turn on a decision that is inherently subjective? If the stakes weren't so needlessly large, the justice or otherwise of the decision wouldn't matter so much.

Both opponents and supporters of reverse discrimination carry around a vision in their heads of a society where we all can be ranked from one to 250 million in terms of our qualifications for every job or other social advantage. The antis see this rank ordering as economically vital, or even as sacred in its own right—the religion of meritocracy. The pros bitterly note that past and present discrimination has skewed the rank orderings, and demand arbitrary access to the higher slots as compensation. In a way, they celebrate and reinforce the hierarchical vision in their attack on its imperfections.

More often than not, though, the attack is too limited. Inequalities of income, wealth, status are inevitable, and in a capitalist system even necessary. But too much energy and time are spent quarreling over the distribution of advantages in society, and not enough asking whether any particular advantage is necessary in the first place. Our society is full of arbitrary hierarchies and superfluous invidious distinctions. In many cases the problem may not be any particular form of discrimination—racial discrimination or sexual discrimination or reverse discrimination—but the simple fact of discrimination itself.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Sermons

I GO TO A CHURCH, ST. COLUMba's Episcopal in Washington, where the sermons are 99 percent free of political advocacy and are devoted instead to spiritual and theological questions. That's good: the last thing Washingtonians need is to be harangued from the pulpit on the topics they harangue each other about all week. They need to think about their relationship to God and about their souls' purpose here on earth. Nevertheless, being irredeemably a Beltway person, I can't help thinking about politics, even in church.

THE BEST SERMON OF 1989 AT St. Columba's was delivered on December 31 by the Rev. Craig Eder, the retired associate rector, on the subject of gifts. Like the eddy of a big rock thrown in water, Craig said, any great gift creates a wave that goes on forever. He said that he'd received two such gifts last year. The first, from his sister, was a little bag containing stones from the Berlin Wall. "The stones represent a gift of the mysterious forces of history," he said. "If Hebrew prophets were around today, they would proclaim that God's hand is in the destruction of the Wall. They would see this event as God's gift. The crash of the Wall forms waves that roll on and on, freeing people in other countries—Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania. They have their effect in Russia and China. The waves reach out to the ends of the earth and deep into the spirit of the human race. . . . The stones were a gift from my sister to me, but they signify a gift of freedom, of new life given to the whole world."

THE SECOND GIFT CAME WHEN a friend called and asked him to nominate three people for whom a modest amount of money ($500) would make a true difference. The money was from a fund created to memorialize a dead child. Craig told the stories of the three people: an elderly, ill woman living only on Social Security; a man who'd given up his profession to care for his children when his wife left them, and who had gone deeply into debt buying a house to remodel and sell; and a man in jail for gross financial irresponsibility, who was going to find it difficult to get a job when he got out. "These gifts were inspired by the desire of the anonymous donor to bring some great good out of the death of a child," he said. And they too radiated: the old woman gave $100 of her money to someone poorer than she. The home remodeler was moved to take his kids to serve Christmas dinner at a homeless shelter. And Craig said he heard that the convict burst into tears when he heard about the gift, "Oh, that anyone could believe in me that much!" Craig went on to make the theological point appropriate for an Episcopal Church: "The gifts were inspired ultimately by Christmas, God's gift to the world of himself as a child. . . . It was this gift of himself that inspired the power of the belief that each person matters, therefore each person has rights—human rights—to be free and fully human. This belief is what finally smashed the Berlin Wall. The Wall fell, broken by some of those waves from the gift of Christ long ago."

IN THE MIDST OF SUCH AN ELOquent sermon, who but a Washington animal could think about politics? Well, it wasn't partisan or ideological politics, but spiritual politics—specifically, the cover story in the December *Atlantic* by Glenn Tinder titled "Can We Be Good Without God?" Tinder, a political science professor at the University of Massachusetts, is about to publish a book called *The Political Meaning of Christianity* (Louisiana State University Press). He makes it very clear, by the way, that he's talking about Judeo-Christianity: the belief system embodied by Jesus, a Jew, and universalized by the Christians: that people should love God and selflessly love one another. Tinder's case is that we cannot be good—politically—without God. That is, he says, the ideas that individuals are invaluable and that they are inherently equal (the ideas on which democracy is based) fundamentally derive from Judeo-Christianity. If society goes totally secular, he maintains, democracy is not safe because the values that underpin it will crumble under pressure.

SECULARISTS AND HUMANISTS surely will quarrel. They say that mankind is capable of building a loving community without religion, and they point out that religion has often been the sponsor of barbarity. Tinder makes a powerful counterargument: every time people try to create paradise without God, they create Hell instead. They've done it twice in this century on a grand scale. Nazism derived its intellectual underpinning from Nietzsche, who said squarely that Christian love was nothing but a device invented by the weak, the poor, and the sick (Jesus' crowd) to keep the strong and smart from running things as they please, which is their right. Marx was the ultimate egalitarian, but as a scientific materialist he gave no overriding reason why all people deserved to be treated with dignity. And in his name, of course, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and Ceausescu used people as means to an end and destroyed them by the millions.

TINDER SAYS AMERICANS ARE NOT immune from the temptation to use other people for their own purposes. No humans are. American nationalism, anticommunism, and democratic idolatry haven't wreaked the havoc that other ideologies have, but they are on the same slippery slope. We use force to impose our system. We are self-righteous about it. We devalue other systems and cultures. The humanists and secularists are right about this: fanatic religionism, next to Nazism and communism, probably has led to more repression and bloodshed than any other ideology, especially when religion is coupled with state power. Christians surely have butchered people in the name of religion. The point is, it was not with Christ's blessing. He did not tell his followers to conquer the world, but to redeem it.

FOR WASHINGTON, THE POLITIcal lessons of this theology seem to be: loving our fellow human beings, we should help them attain freedom, but not dominate them; and we should give to those in need, not just other people's tax money, but from our own personal time, energy, and resources. St. Columba's used to be George Bush's church. He hardly ever shows up anymore, but if he had been there for Craig Eder's sermon, he might have gone home resolving to put more effort into the nonviolent promotion of freedom (e.g., the National Endowment for Democracy, which trains democratic activists and gives them resources) and into poverty-fighting, including his own Thousand Points of Light initiative.

BUSH DELIVERED A PRETTY ELOquent sermon himself on Inauguration Day 1989. He started with a prayer (". . . write on our hearts these words: 'Use power to help people' "), and went on to say that he hoped to create an ethic whereby an American's sense of merit would not be based on what he possessed, but on what he did for others. Bush said he wanted there to be "a new engagement in the lives of others—a new activism . . . that gets the job done." He vowed, "I will go to the people and the programs that are the brighter points of light, and I'll ask every member of my government to become involved." Nice words, but I'm afraid George has forgotten.

MORTON M. KONDRACKE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Over 150 other airlines admire our maintenance so much, we work on their planes too.

How well an airline maintains its reputation depends largely on how well that airline maintains its planes. Which is why, after considering Lufthansa's record for on-time performance, so many other airlines have asked Lufthansa to help keep their planes in perfect working order.

After all, if so many other airlines ask for Lufthansa, shouldn't you?

People expect the world of us.

Lufthansa

Lufthansa is a participant in the mileage programs of United, Delta, USAir and Continental/Eastern. See your Travel Agent for details.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED